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To dear little Mussia.
 31st May 1922.

"Michah"

In loving memory of my
 dear wife.

H. W. Bull

J. Bull.

Nov 44

THE COLLECTED POEMS OF
ELLA WHEELER WILCOX



35487

POEMS

BY

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

McCLELLAND & STEWART
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POEMS OF PASSION

THE DESTROYER

WITH care, and skill, and cunning art
She parried Time's malicious dart,
And kept the years at bay,
Till passion entered in her heart
And aged her in a day !

A FALLEN LEAF

A TRUSTING little leaf of green,
A bold audacious frost ;
A rendezvous, a kiss or two,
And youth for ever lost.
Ah, me !
The bitter, bitter cost.

A flaunting patch of vivid red,
That quivers in the sun ;
A windy gust, a grave of dust,
The little race is run.
Ah, me !
Were that the only one.

■

SO MANY WAYS

I

EARTH has so many ways of being fair :
Its sweet young Spring, its Summer clothed in
light,

Its regal Autumn trailing into sight
As Summer wafts her last kiss on the air ;
Bold, virile Winter with the wind-blown hair,
And the broad beauty of a world in white.
Mysterious dawn, high noon, and pensive night,
And over all God's great worlds watching there.
The voices of the birds at break of day ;
The smell of young buds bursting on the tree ,
The soft, suggestive promises of bliss,
Uttered by every subtle voice of May ;
And the strange wonder of the mighty sea,
Lifting its cheek to take the full moon's kiss.

II

Love has so many ways of being sweet :
The timorous, rose-hued dawning of its reign
Before the senses waken ; that dear pain
Of mingled doubt and certainty ; the fleet,
First moment when the clasped hands meet
In wordless eloquence ; the loss and gain
When the strong billows from the deeper main
Submerge the valleys of the incomplete.

THE SNOWFLAKE

5

The restless passion rising into peace ;
The growing beauty of two paths that blend
Into one perfect way. The glorious faith
That feels no fear of life's expiring lease ;
And that majestic victory at the end
When love, unconquered, triumphs over death.

THE SNOWFLAKE

ALL sheltered by the mother-cloud
The little flake looked down ;
It saw the city's seething crowd,
It saw the shining town.

• How fair and far those steeples rise
To greet us, mother dear !
It is so lovely in the skies,
Why do we linger here ?

• The north wind says the merry earth
Is full of life and glow
I long to mingle with its earth—
O mother ! let us go.

The mother-cloud reached out her arm.
'O little flake,' quoth she,
'The earth is full of sin and harm,
Bide here, bide here, with me.'

TO MEN

But when the pale cloud-mother slept,
 The north wind whispered, ' Fly !'
 And from her couch the snowflake crept
 And tiptoed down the sky.

Before the Winter's sun his fleet
 Brief journey made that day,
 All soiled and blackened in the street
 The little snowflake lay.

TO MEN

SIRS, when you pity us, I say
 You waste your pity. Let it stay,
 Well corked and stored upon your shelves,
 Until you need it for yourselves.

We do appreciate God's thought
 In forming you, before He brought
 Us into life. His art was crude,
 But oh, so virile in its rude

Large elemental strength : and then
 He learned His trade in making men ;
 Learned how to mix and mould the clay
 And fashion in a finer way.

How fine that skilful way can be
 You need but lift your eyes to see ;
 And we are glad God placed you there
 To lift your eyes and find us fair.

TO MEN

7

Apprentice labour though you were,
He made you great enough to stir
The best and deepest depths of us,
And we are glad He made you thus.

Ay ! we are glad of many things.
God strung our hearts with such fine strings
The least breath moves them, and we hear
Music where silence greets your ear.

We suffer so ? but women's souls,
Like violet powder dropped on coals,
Give forth their best in anguish. Oh,
The subtle secrets that we know.

Of joy in sorrow, strange delights
Of ecstasy in pain-filled nights,
And mysteries of gain in loss
Known but to Christ upon the Cross !

Our tears are pitiful to you ?
Look how the heaven-reflecting dew
Dissolves its life in tears. The sand
Meanwhile lies hard upon the strand.

How could your pity find a place
For us, the mothers of the race ?
Men may be fathers unaware,
So poor the title is you wear.

GOD'S MOTTO

But mothers——? who that crown adorns
 Knows all its mingled blooms and thorns;
 And she whose feet that path hath trod
 Has walked upon the heights with God.

No, offer us not pity's cup.
 There is no looking down or up
 Between us: eye looks straight in eye:
 Born equals, so we live and die.

GOD'S MOTTO

THIS is the season of wooing and mating,
 The heart of Nature calls out for its own,
 And God have pity on those who are waiting
 The fair unfolding of Spring, alone.
 For the fowls fly north in pairs together,
 And two by two are the leaves unfurled,
 And the whole intent of the wind and weather
 Is to waken love in the thought of the world.

Up through the soil where the grass is springing,
 To flaunt green flags in the golden light,
 Each little sprout its mate is bringing
 (Oh! one little sprout were a lonely sight).
 We wake at dawn with the silvery patter
 Of bird-notes falling like showers of rain,
 And need but listen to prove their chatter
 The amorous echo of love's sweet pain.

MOON AND SEA

In the buzz of the bee and the strong steed's neighing,
In the hursting bud and the heart's unrest,
The voice of Nature again is saying,
In God's own motto, that love is best.
For this is the season of wooing and mating,
The heart of Nature calls out for its own ;
And O the sorrow of souls that are waiting
The soft unfolding of Spring, alone !

MOON AND SEA

YOU are the moon, dear love, and I the sea :
The tide of hope swells high within my breast,
And hides the rough dark rocks of life's unrest
When your fond eyes smile near in perigee.
But when that loving face is turned from me,
Low falls the tide, and the grim rocks appear,
And earth's dim coast-line seems a thing to fear.
You are the moon, dear one, and I the sea.

HOW LIKE THE SEA

HOW like the sea, the myriad-minded sea,
Is this large love of ours : so vast, so deep,
So full of mysteries ! It, too, can keep
Its secrets, like the ocean ; and is free,

THAT DAY

Free, as the boundless main. Now it may be
 Calm, like the brow of some sweet child asleep
 Again its seething billows surge and leap
 And break in fulness of their ecstasy.

Each wave so like the wave which came before,
 Yet never two the same! Imperative
 And then persuasive as the cooing dove,
 Encroaching ever on the yielding shore—
 Ready to take; yet readier still to give—
 How like the myriad-minded sea, is love!

THAT DAY

O HEART of mine, through all those perfect days,
 Whether of white Decembers or green Mays,
 There runs a dark thought like a creeping snake,
 Or like a black thread which by some mistake
 Life has strung through the pearls of happy years,
 A thought which borders all my joy with tears.

Some day, some day, or you, or I, alone,
 Must look upon the scenes we two have known,
 Must tread the selfsame paths we two have trod,
 And cry in vain to one who is with God.
 To lean down from the Silent Realms and say:
 'I love you' in the old familiar way.

THAT DAY

11

Some day—and each day, beauteous though it be,
Brings closer that dread hour for you or me.
Fleet-footed joy, who hurries time along,
Is yet a secret foe who does us wrong ;
Speeding us gaily, though he well doth know
Of yonder pathway where but one may go.

Ay, one will go. To go is sweet, I wis—
Yet God must needs invent some special bliss
To make His Paradise seem very dear
To one who goes and leaves the other here.
To sever souls so bound by love and time,
For any one but God, would be a crime.

Yet death will entertain his own, I think.
To one who stays life gives the gall to drink ;
To one who stays, or be it you or me,
There waits the Garden of Gethsemane.
O dark, inevitable, and awful day,
When one of us must go and one must stay !

THREEFOLD

OUR love wakes in the morning, unafraid
To meet the little worries of the day ;
And if a haggard dawn, dull-eyed and grey,
Peers in upon us through the window shade,

Full soon love's finger, rosy tipped, is laid
Upon its brow, and gloom departs straightway.
All outer darkness melts before that ray
Of inner light, whereof our love is made ;
Each petty trouble and each pigmy care,
And those gaunt-visaged duties which so fill
Life's path by day, do borrow of love's grace.
Though he be dear alway, and debonair,
In the young morning best he proves his skill,
Lending his lustre to the commonplace.

II

Our love looks boldly in the noon's bold eyes ;
He has no thing to hide, no thing to fear ;
And if the world stands far, or jostles near,
He walks alway serene, without disguise,
Naked and not ashamed, beneath the skies.
He does not need dark backgrounds to appear
Radiant, for even through the broad day's clear
Effulgence his supernal beauties rise.
Oh, there be loves that hide till day is done,
Nocturnal loves, like silent birds of prey ;
Secretive loves, that do not dare rejoice !
Ours is an eagle that can face the sun,
A wholesome love that glories in the day,
And finds a rapture in its own glad voice.

III

Our love augments in beauty when the night
 Shuts in our world between four sheltering walls.
 Fair is the day, and yet its splendour palls ;
 Dear are the shadows that obscure the light,
 And dear the stars that tiptoe into sight ;
 And when the curtain of deep darkness falls,
 Then heart to heart in clearer accents calls,
 And the whole universe is Love's by right.
 There is no vexing world to interfere ;
 No sorrow save the all too rapid flow
 Of time's swift river, sweeping on and on.
 We two are masters of this silent sphere—
 Love is the only duty that we know,
 Our only fear the menace of the dawn.

LOVE IS ALL

REPLY TO EDWIN MARKHAM'S 'MAN WITH A HOE'

THE time has come—ay, even now it is,
 To rank that parable in Genesis
 Of God's great curse of labour placed on man,
 With other fairy tales. Why, God began
 All work Himself ! He was so full of force
 He flung the solar systems on their course
 And builded worlds on worlds : and not content,
 He labours still. When mighty suns are spent

LOVE IS ALL

He forges on His white-hot anvil space
New stars to tell His glory and His grace.
Who most achieves, is most like God, I hold;
The idler is the black sheep in the fold.
Not for the burdened toiler with the 'hoe'
My tears of sorrow and compassion flow.
Though he may be dull, unlettered, and not fair
To look upon, though he be bowed with care,
Yet in his heart, if dear love folds its wings,
He stands a monarch over unloved kings.
One sorrow only in God's world has birth—
To live unloving and unloved on earth.
One joy alone makes earth a part of heaven—
The joy of happy love received and given.

Down through the chaos of our human laws
Love shines supreme, the great Eternal Cause.
God loved so much, His thoughts burst into flame,
And from that sacred Source creation came.
The heart which feels this holy light within,
Finds God, and man, and beast and bird its kin.
All class distinctions fade and disappear;
Death is but life, and heaven, he feels, is near.
Brother is he to 'ox' and 'seraphim,'
'Slave to the wheel' mayhap, yet kings to him
And millionaires seem paupers, if from them
Life has withheld its luminous great gem;
Or if his badge be sceptre, hoe, or hod,
That man is king who knows that love is God.

A LOVER'S QUARREL

15

A LOVER'S QUARREL

WE two were lovers, the Sea and I ;
We plighted our troth 'neath a summer sky.

And all through the riotous, ardent weather
We dreamed, and loved, and rejoiced together.

.

At times my lover would rage and storm.
I said : 'No matter, his heart is warm.'

Whatever his humour, I loved his ways,
And so we lived through the golden days.

I know not the manner it came about,
But in the autumn we two fell out.

Yet this I know—'twas the fault of the Sea,
And was not my fault, that he changed to me.

.

I lingered as long as a woman may
To find what her lover will do or say.

But he met my smiles with a sullen frown,
And so I turned to the wooing Town.

Oh, bold was this suitor, and blithe as bold !
His look was as bright as the Sea's was cold.

As the Sea was sullen, the Town was gay ;
He made me forget for a winter day.

A LOVER'S QUARREL

For a winter day and a winter night
 He laughed my sorrow away from sight.
 And yet, in spite of his mirth and cheer,
 I knew full well he was insincere.
 And when the young buds burst on the tree,
 The old love woke in my heart for the Sea.
 Pride was forgotten—I knew, I knew,
 That the soul of the Sea, like my own, was true.
 I heard him calling, and lo! I came,
 To find him waiting, for ever the same.
 And when he saw me, with murmurs sweet,
 He ran to meet me, and fell at my feet.
 And so again 'neath a summer sky
 We have plighted our troth, the Sea and I.

REPLY TO RUDYARD KIPLING'S POEM

'He travels the fastest who travels alone.'

WHO travels alone with his eye on the heights,
 Though he laughs in the daytime, oft weeps
 through the nights;
 For courage goes down with the set of the sun,
 When the toil of the journey is all borne by one.
 He speeds but to grief, though full gaily he ride,
 Who travels alone without Love at his side.

REPLY TO RUDYARD KIPLING'S POEM 17

Who travels alone, without lover or friend,
But hurries from nothing, to nought at the end ;
Though great be his winnings, and high be his goal,
He is bankrupt in wisdom, and beggared in soul.
Life's one gift of value to him is denied
Who travels alone without Love at his side.

It is easy enough in this world to make haste
If we live for that purpose ; but think of the waste !
For life is a poem to leisurely read,
And the joy of a journey lies not in its speed.
Oh ! vain his achievement, and petty his pride,
Who travels alone without Love at his side.

THE BED

A HARSH and homely monosyllable,
Abrupt and musicless, and at its best
An inartistic object to the eye,
Yet in this brief and troubled life of man
How full of majesty the part it plays !
It is the cradle which receives the soul,
Naked and wailing, from the Maker's hand.
It is the throne of Love's enlightenment ;
And when death offers back to God again
The borrowed spirit, this the holy shrine
From which the hills delectable are seen.

Through all the anxious journey to that goal
 It is man's friend, physician, comforter.
 When labour wearies, and when pleasure palls,
 And the tired heart lets faith slip from its grasp,
 'Tis here new courage and new strength are found,
 While doubt and darkness change to hope and light
 It is the common ground between two spheres
 Where men and angels meet and converse hold.
 It is the confidant of hidden woe
 Masked from the world beneath a smiling brow.
 Into its silent breast young's wakeful joy
 Whispers its secret through the starlit hours,
 And, like a white-robed priestess, oft it hears
 The wild confession of a crime-stained soul
 That looks unflinching in the eyes of men.
 A common word, a thing unbeautiful,
 Yet in this brief, eventful life of man
 How large and varied is the part it plays!

SAYS CUPID TO MAMMON

YOURS is a magic key. It opens wide
 The door whereon is writ 'Society'
 And 'No admittance save to the elect.'
 Slowly, and with reluctance oftentimes,
 The heavy hinges turn; yet turn away
 When you persist, so potent is your power.

SAYS CUPID TO MAMMON

19

Through halls kept sacred to the name of Caste
You walk, undaunted by the silent stare
Of proud ancestral faces on the walls—
Your coat of arms the mighty ⚔ sign.

You influence nations, rule affairs of state,
And purchase leaders. Politics to-day
Is but another synonym for that
Ignoble, base word—money.

With your key

You enter churches, and pervert the creed,
And substitute the word of man for Christ's
Large loving utterances. You buy and sell
And 'water' and 'manipulate' religion
Like stock upon the street; your satellites
Kneel in their cushioned pews and mumble prayers
With hatred in their hearts, and pride and greed
Where brotherhood should dwell.

All this you do,
O monarch, but behold your Wellington!
In Love's fair court there is no lock which turns
For Mammon's key. When Hymen gives you
heed,

He stands without my gates, no ken of mine.

Love has the only kingdom in the world
Where money cannot purchase place or power;
And in the rapture of one mutual kiss,

LOVE'S LANGUAGE

When soul meets soul as lip clings close to lip,
Lies more delight than all earth's other realms
Combined can offer to the human heart.

In this brief life the memory of one hour
Of perfect love is worth all other joys,
And he who has it not, though he be king,
Goes beggared through the world.

LOVE'S LANGUAGE

HOW does Love speak?
In the faint flush upon the telltale cheek,
And in the pallor that succeeds it; by
The quivering lid of an averted eye—
The smile that proves the parent to a sigh—
Thus doth Love speak.

How does Love speak?
By the uneven heart-throbs, and the freak
Of bounding pulses that stand still and ache,
While new emotions, like strange barges, make
Along vein-channels their disturbing course;
Still as the dawn, and with the dawn's swift force—
Thus doth Love speak.

How does Love speak?
In the avoidance of that which we seek—
The sudden silence and reserve when near—

LOVE'S LANGUAGE

21

The eye that glistens with an unshed tear—
The joy that seems the counterpart of fear,
As the alarmed heart leaps in the breast,
And knows, and names, and greets its godlike guest—
Thus doth Love speak.

How does Love speak?

In the proud spirit suddenly grown meek—
The haughty heart grown humble ; in the tender
And unnamed light that floods the world with
splendour ;
In the resemblance which the fond eyes trace
In all fair things to one beloved face ;
In the shy touch of hands that thrill and tremble—
In looks and lips that can no more dissemble—
Thus doth Love speak.

How does Love speak?

In the wild words that uttered seem so weak
They shrink ashamed to silence ; in the fire
Glance strikes with glance, swift flashing high and
higher,
Like lightnings that precede the mighty storm ;
In the deep soulful stillness ; in the warm,
Impassioned tide that sweeps through throbbing veins,
Between the shores of keen delights and pains ;
In the embrace where madness melts in bliss,
And in the convulsive rapture of a kiss—
Thus doth Love speak.

IMPATIENCE

HOW can I wait until you come to me ?
 The once fleet mornings linger by the way ;
 Their sunny smiles touched with malicious glee
 At my unrest, they seem to pause and play
 Like truant children, while I sigh and say,
 How can I wait ?

How can I wait ? Of old, the rapid hours
 Refused to pause or loiter with me long ;
 But now they idly fill their hands with flowers,
 And make no haste, but slowly stroll among
 The summer blooms, not heeding my one song,
 How can I wait ?

How can I wait ? The nights alone are kind ;
 They reach forth to a future day, and bring
 Sweet dreams of you to people all my mind ;
 And time speeds by on light and airy wing.
 I feast upon your face, I no more sing,
 How can I wait ?

How can I wait ? The morning breaks the spell
 A pitying night has flung upon my soul.
 You are not near me, and I know full well
 My heart has need of patience and control ;
 Before we meet, hours, days, and weeks must roll.
 How can I wait ?

COMMUNISM

23

How can I wait ? O Love, how can I wait
Until the sunlight of your eyes shall shine
Upon my world that seems so desolate ?
Until your hand-clasp warms my blood like wine ;
Until you come again, O Love of mine,
How can I wait ?

COMMUNISM

WHEN my blood flows calm as a purling river,
When my heart is asleep and my brain has
away,

It is then that I vow we must part for ever,
That I will forget you, and put you away
Out of my life, as a dream is banished
Out of the mind when the dreamer awakes ;
That I know it will be when the spell has vanished,
Better for both of our sakes.

When the court of the mind is ruled by Reason,
I know it is wiser for us to part ;
But Love is a spy who is plotting treason,
In league with that warm, red rebel, the Heart.
They whisper to me that the King is cruel,
That his reign is wicked, his law a sin,
And every word they utter is fuel
To the flame that smoulders within.

COMMUNISM

And on nights like this, when my blood runs riot
With the fever of youth and its mad desires,
When my brain in vain bids my heart be quiet,
When my breast seems the centre of lava-fires,
Oh, then is the time when most I miss you,
And I swear by the stars and my soul and say
That I will have you, and hold you, and kiss you,
Though the whole world stands in the way.

And like Communists, as mad, as disloyal,
My fierce emotions roam out of their lair;
They hate King Reason for being royal—
They would fire his castle, and burn him there.
O Love! they would clasp you, and crush you and
kill you,
In the insurrection of uncontrol.
Across the miles, does this wild war thrill you
That is raging in my soul?

THE COMMON LOT

IT is a common fate—a woman's lot—
To waste on one the riches of her soul,
Who takes the wealth she gives him, but cannot
Repay the interest, and much less the whole.

As I look up into your eyes, and wait
For some response to my fond gaze and touch,
It seems to me there is no sadder fate
Than to be doomed to loving overmuch.

Are you not kind ? Ah, yes, so very kind—
So thoughtful of my comfort, and so true.
Yes, yes, dear heart ; but I, not being blind,
Know that I am not loved, as I love you.

One tenderer word, a little longer kiss,
Will fill my soul with music and with song ;
And if you seem abstracted, or I miss
The heart-tone from your voice, my world goes
wrong.

And oftentimes you think me childish—weak—
When at some thoughtless word the tears will
start ;
You cannot understand how aught you speak
Has power to stir the depths of my poor heart.

I cannot help it, dear—I wish I could,
Or feign indifference where I now adore ;
For if I seemed to love you less, you would,
Manlike, I have no doubt, love me the more.

'Tis a sad gift, that much applauded thing.
A constant heart ; for fact doth daily prove
That constancy finds oft a cruel sting,
While fickle natures win the deeper love.

INDIVIDUALITY

A H yes, I love you, and with all my heart ;
 Just as a weaker woman loves her own,
 Better than I love my beloved art,
 Which, till you came, reigned royally, alone,
 My king, my master Since I saw your face
 I have dethroned it, and you hold that place.

I am as weak as other women are—
 Your frown can make the whole world like a tomb,
 Your smile shines brighter than the sun, by far ,
 Sometimes I think there is not space or room
 In all the earth for such a love as mine,
 And it soars up to breathe in realms divine.

I know that your desertion or neglect
 Could break my heart, as women's hearts do break ;
 If my wan days had nothing to expect
 From your love's splendour, all joy would forsake
 The chambers of my soul. Yes, this is true
 And yet, and yet—one thing I keep from you.

There is a subtle part of me, which went
 Into my lone pursued and worshipped art ;
 Though your great love fills me with such content,
 No other love finds room now in my heart.
 Yet that rare essence was my art's alone.
 Thank God, you cannot grasp it, 'tis mine own.

Thank God, I say, for while I love you so,
With that vast love, as passionate as tender,
I feel an exultation as I know
I have not made you a complete surrender.
Here is my body ; bruise it, if you will,
And break my heart ; I have that something still.

You cannot grasp it. Seize the breath of morn,
Or bind the perfume of the rose as well.
God put it in my soul when I was born ;
It is not mine to give away, or sell,
Or offer up on any altar shrine.
It was my art's ; and when not art's, 'tis mine.

For love's sake, I can put the art away,
Or anything which stands 'twixt me and you ;
But that strange essence God bestowed, I say,
To permeate the work He gave to do :
And it cannot be drained, dissolved, or sent
Through any channel, save the one He meant.

FRIENDSHIP AFTER LOVE

AFTER the fierce midsummer all ablaze
Has burned itself to ashes, and expires
In the intensity of its own fires,
There come the mellow, mild, St. Martin days

Crowned with the calm of peace, but sad with haze.
 So after Love has led us, till he tires
 Of his own thrives, and torments, and desires,
 Comes large-eyed friendship : with a restful gaze,
 He beckons us to follow, and across
 Cool verdant vales we wander free from care.
 Is it a touch of frost lies in the air ?
 Why are we haunted with a sense of loss ?
 We do not wish the pain back, or the heat :
 And yet, and yet, these days are incomplete.

QUERIES

WELL, how has it been with you since we met.
 That last strange time of a hundred times ?
 When we met to swear that we could forget—
 I your caresses, and you my rhymes—
 The rhyme of my lays that rang like a bell,
 And the rhyme of my heart with yours, as well ?

How has it been since we drank that last kiss,
 That was bitter with lees of the wasted wine,
 When the tattered remains of a threadbare bliss,
 And the worn-out shreds of a joy divine,
 With a year's best dreams and hopes, were cast
 Into the ragbag of the Past ?

Since Time, the rag-buyer, hurried away
 With a chuckle of glee at the bargain made,
 Did you discover, like me, one day
 That hid in the folds of those garments frayed
 Were priceless jewels and diadems—
 The soul's best treasures, the hearts best gems?

Have you, too, found that you could not supply
 The place of those jewels so rare and chaste?
 Do all that you borrow, or beg, or buy,
 Prove to be nothing but skilful paste?
 Have you found pleasure, as I find art,
 Not all-sufficient to fill your heart?

Do you sometimes sigh for the tattered shreds
 Of the old delight that we cast away,
 And find no worth in the silken threads
 Of newer fabrics we wear to-day?
 Have you thought the bitter of that last kiss
 Better than sweets of a later bliss?

What idle queries!—or yes or no—
 Whatever your answer, I understand
 That there is no pathway by which we can go
 Back to the dead past's wonderland;
 And the gems he purchased from me, and you,
 There is no rebuying, from Time, the Jew.

UPON THE SAND

UPON THE SAND

ALL love that has not friendship for its base,
 Is like a mansion built upon the sand.
 Though brave its walls as any in the land,
 And its tall turrets lift their heads in grace ;
 Though skilful and accomplished artists trace
 Most beautiful designs on every hand,
 And gleaming statues in dim niches stand,
 And fountains play in some flow'r-hidden place :
 Yet, when from the frowning east a sudden gust
 Of adverse fate is blown, or sad rains fall
 Day in, day out, against its yielding wall,
 Lo ! the fair structure crumbles to the dust.
 Love, to endure life's sorrow and earth's woe,
 Needs friendship's solid masonwork below.

REUNITED

LET us begin, dear love, where we left off ;
 Tie up the broken threads of that old dream ;
 And go on happy as before ; and seem
 Lovers again, though all the world may scoff.
 Let us forget the graves, which lie between
 Our parting and our meeting, and the tears
 That rusted out the goldwork of the years ;
 The frosts that fell upon our gardens green.

REUNITED

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Let us forget the cold malicious Fate
Who made our loving hearts her idle toys,
And once more revel in the old sweet joys
Of happy love. Nay, it is not too late !
Forget the deep-ploughed furrows in my brow ;
Forget the silver gleaming in my hair ;
Look only in my eyes ! O darling ! there
The old love shone no warmer then than now.

Down in the tender deeps of thy dear eyes,
I find the lost sweet memory of my youth,
Bright with the holy radiance of thy truth,
And hallowed with the blue of summer skies.
Tie up the broken threads, and let us go,
Like reunited lovers, hand in hand,
Back, and yet onward, to the sunny land
Of our To Be, which was our Long Ago.

WHAT SHALL WE DO ?

HERE now, for evermore our lives must part.
My path leads there, and yours another way.
What shall we do with this fond love, dear heart ?
It grows a heavier burden day by day.

Hide it ? In all earth's caverns, void and vast,
There is not room enough to hide it, dear ;
Not even the mighty storehouse of the past
Could cover it, from our own eyes, I fear.

Drown it ? Why, were the contents of each ocean
Merged into one great sea, too shallow then
Would be its waters, to sink this emotion
So deep it could not rise to life again.

Burn it ? In all the furnace flames below,
It would not in a thousand years expire.
Nay ! it would thrive, exult, expand, and grow.
For from its very birth it fed on fire.

Starve it ? Yes, yes, that is the only way.
Give it no food, of glance, or word, or sigh,
No memories, even, of any bygone day ;
No crumbs of vain regrets—so let it die.

‘THE BEAUTIFUL BLUE DANUBE’

THEY drift down the hall together ;
He smiles in her lifted eyes.
Like waves of that mighty river
The strains of the ‘Danube’ rise.
They float on its rhythmic measure,
Like leaves on a summer stream ;
And here, in this scene of pleasure,
I bury my sweet dead dream.

'THE BEAUTIFUL BLUE DANUBE' 33

'Through the cloud of her dusky tresses,
Like a star, shines out her face ;
And the form his strong arm presses
Is sylph-like in its grace.
As a leaf on the bounding river
Is lost in the seething sea,
I know that for ever and ever
My dream is lost to me.

And still the viols are playing
That grand old wordless rhyme ;
And still those two are swaying
In perfect tune and time.
If the great bassoons that mutter,
If the clarinets that blow,
Were given a voice to utter
The secret things they know,

Would the lists of the slain who slumber
On the Danube's battle-plains
The unknown hosts outnumber
Who die 'neath the ' Danube's ' strains ?
Those fall where cannons rattle,
'Mid the rain of shot and shell
But these, in a fiercer battle,
Find death in the music's swell

ANSWERED

With the river's roar of passion
Is blended the dying groan ;
But here, in the halls of fashion,
Hearts break, and make no moan.
And the music, swelling and sweeping,
Like the river, knows it all ;
But none are counting or keeping
The lists of those who fall.

ANSWERED

GOOD-BYE—yes, I am going.
Sudden ? Well, you are right.
But a startling truth came home to me
With sudden force last night.
What is it ? shall I tell you ?—
Nay, that is why I go.
I am running away from the battlefield,
Turning my back on the foe,
Riddles ? You think me cruel !
Have you not been most kind ?
Why, when you question me like that,
What answer can I find ?
You fear you failed to amuse me,
Your husband's friend and guest,
Whom he bade you entertain and please—
Well, you have done your best.

ANSWERED

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Then why, you ask, am I going?
A friend of mind abroad,
Whose theories I have been acting upon
'Tis proven himself a fraud.
You have heard me quote from Plato
A thousand times, no doubt;
Well, I have discovered he did not know
What he was talking about.

You think I am speaking strangely?
You cannot understand?
Well, let me look down into your eyes,
And let me take your hand.
I am running away from danger—
I am flying before I fall;
I am going because with heart and soul
I love you—that is all.

There, now, you are white with anger.
I knew it would be so.
You should not question a man too close
When he tells you he must go.

THROUGH THE VALLEY

(AFTER JAMES THOMSON)

AS I came through the Valley of Despair,
As I came through the valley, on my sight,
More awful than the darkness of the night,
Shone glimpses of a Past that had been fair,
And memories of eyes that used to smile,
And wafts of perfume from a vanished isle.
As I came through the valley.

As I came through the valley I could see,
As I came through the valley, fair and far,
As drowning men look up and see a star,
The fading shore of my lost Used-to-be ;
And like an arrow in my heart I heard
The last sad notes of Hope's expiring bird,
As I came through the valley.

As I came through the valley desolate,
As I came through the valley, like a beam
Of lurid lightning I beheld a gleam
Of Love's great eyes that now were full of hate.
Dear God ! dear God ! I could bear all but that ;
But I fell down soul-stricken, dead, thereat,
As I came through the valley.

BUT ONE

THE year has but one June, dear friend,
The year has but one June ;
And when that perfect month doth end,
The robin's song, though loud, though long,
Seems never quite in tune.

The rose, though still its blushing face
By bee and bird is seen,
May yet have lost that subtle grace—
That nameless spell the winds know well—
Which makes its gardens queen.

Life's perfect June, love's red, red rose,
Have burned and bloomed for me.
Though still youth's summer sunlight glows ;
Though thou art kind, dear friend, I find
I have no heart for thee.

GUILLO

YES, yes ! I love thee, Guilo ; thee alone.
Why dost thou sigh, and wear that face of
sorrow ?
The sunshine is to-day's, although it shone
On yesterday, and may shine on to-morrow.

I love but thee, my Guilo I be content,
The greediest heart can claim but present pleasure,
The future is thy God's. The past is spent.
To-day is thine ; clasp close the precious treasure.

See how I love thee, Guilo ! Lips and eyes
Could never under thy fond gaze dissemble.
I could not feign these passion-laden sighs,
Deceiving thee, my pulses would not tremble.

'And Paul ?' Well, what of Paul ? Paul had blue
eyes,
And Romney grey, and thine are darkly tender '
One finds fresh feelings under change of skies—
A new horizon brings a newer splendour.

As I love thee, I never loved before ;
Believe me, Guilo, for I speak most truly.
What though to Romney and to Paul I swore
The selfsame words ; my heart now worships newly.

We never feel the same emotion twice :
No two ships ever ploughed the selfsame billow ;
The waters change with every fall and rise ;
So, Guilo, go contented to thy pillow.

THE DUET

I WAS smoking a cigarette ;
Maud, my wife, and the tenor McKey
Were singing together a blithe duet,
And days it were better I should forget
Came suddenly back to me,
Days when life seemed a gay masque ball,
And to love and be loved as the sum of it all.

As they sang together the whole scene fled,
The room's rich hangings, the sweet home air,
Stately Maud, with her proud blonde head,
And I seemed to see in her place instead
A wealth of blue-black hair,
And a face, ah ! your face,—yours, Lisette,
A face it were wiser I should forget.

We were back—well, no matter when or where,
But you remember, I know, Lisette,
I saw you, dainty, and débonnaire,
With the very same look that you used to wear
In the days I should forget.
And your lips, as red as the vintage we quaffed,
Were pearl-edged bumpers of wine when you
laughed.

THE DUET

Two small slippers with big rosettes
Peeped out under your kilt-skirt there,
While we sat smoking our cigarettes
(Oh, I shall be dust when my heart forgets !)

And singing that selfsame air ;
And between the verses for interlude,
I kissed your throat, and your shoulders nude

You were so full of a subtle fire,
You were so warm and so sweet, Lisette ;
You were everything men admire,
And there were no fetters to make us tire ;
For you were—a pretty grisette.
But you loved, as only such natures can,
With a love that makes heaven or hell for a man

.

They have ceased singing that old duet,
Stately Maud and the tenor McKey.
'You are burning your coat with your cigarette,
'And *qu'avez-vous*, dearest, your lids are wet,'

Maud says, as she leans o'er me.
And I smile, and lie to her, husband-wise,
'Oh, it is nothing but smoke in my eyes.'

LITTLE QUEEN

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LITTLE QUEEN

DO you remember the name I wore—
The old pet-name of Little Queen—
In the dear dead days that are no more,
The happiest days of our lives, I ween ?
For we loved with that passionate love of youth
That blesses but once with its perfect bliss,—
A love that, in spite of its trust and truth,
Seems never to thrive, in a world like this.

I lived for you, and you lived for me ;
All was centred in ' Little Queen ' ;
And never a thought in our hearts had we
That strife or trouble could come between.
What utter sinking of self it was !
How little we cared for the world of men !
For love's fair kingdom, and love's sweet laws,
Were all of the world and life to us then

But a love like ours was a challenge to fate ;
She rang down the curtain and shifted the scene,
Yet sometimes now, when the day grows late,
I can hear you calling for Little Queen ;
For a happy home and a busy life
Can never wholly crowd out our past ;
In the twilight pauses that come from strife,
You will think of me while life shall last.

WHEREFORE

And however sweet the voice of fame
 May sing to me of a great world's praise,
 I shall long sometimes for the old pet-name
 'That you gave to me in the dear, dead days :
 And nothing the angel band can say,
 When I reach the shores of the great Unseen
 Can please me so much as on that day
 'To hear your greeting of 'Little Queen.'

WHEREFORE

WHEREFORE in dreams are sorrows born
 anew,

A healed wound opened, or the past revived /
 Last night in my deep sleep I dreamed of you--
 Again the old love woke in me, and thrived
 On looks of fire, and kisses, and sweet words
 Like silver waters purling in a stream,
 Or like the amorous melodies of birds :
 A dream—a dream.

Again upon the glory of the scene
 There settled that dread shadow of the cross
 That, when hearts love too well, falls in between—
 That warns them of impending woe and loss.
 Again I saw you drifting from my life,
 As barques are rudely parted in a stream ;
 Again my heart was torn with awful strife :
 A dream—a dream.

Again the deep night settled on me there,
Alone I groped, and heard strange waters roll.
Lost in that blackness of supreme despair.
That comes but once to any living soul.
Alone, afraid, I called your name aloud—
Mine eyes, unveiled, beheld white stars agleam,
And lo! awake, I cried, 'Thank God, thank God,
A dream — a dream !'

DELILAH

IN the midnight of darkness and terror,
When I would grope nearer to God,
With my back to a record of error
And the highway of sin I have trod,
There come to me shapes I would banish—
The shapes of the deeds I have done ;
And I pray and I plead till they vanish—
All vanish and leave me, save one.

That one, with a smile like the splendour
Of the sun in the middle-day skies—
That one, with a spell that is tender—
That one with a dream in her eyes—
Cometh close, in her rare Southern beauty
Her languor, her indolent grace ;
And my soul turns its back on its duty
To live in the light of her face.

She touches my cheek, and I quiver—
I tremble with exquisite pains ;
She sighs—like an overcharged river
My blood rushes on through my veins ;
She smiles—and in mad-tiger fashion,
As a she-tiger fondles her own,
I clasp her with fierceness and passion,
And kiss her with shudder and groan.

Once more, in our love's sweet beginning,
I put away God and the World ;
Once more, in the joys of our sinnings,
Are the hopes of eternity hurled.
There is nothing my soul lacks or misses
As I clasp the dream-shape to my breast ;
In the passion and pain of her kisses
Life blooms to its richest and best.

O ghost of dead sin unrelenting,
Go back to the dust, and the sod !
Too dear and too sweet for repenting,
Ye stand between me and my God.
If I, by the Throne, should behold you,
Smiling up with those eyes loved so well,
Close, close in my arms I would fold you,
And drop with you down to sweet Hell !

LOVE-SONG

ONCE in the world's first prime,
 When nothing lived or stirred ;
 Nothing but new-born Time,
 Nor was there even a bird—
 The Silence spoke to a Star ;
 But I do not dare repeat
 What it said to its love afar :
 It was too sweet, too sweet.

But there, in the fair world's youth,
 Ere sorrow had drawn breath,
 When nothing was known but Truth,
 Nor was there even death,
 The Star to Silence was wed,
 And the Sun was priest that day,
 And they made their bridal-bed
 High in the Milky Way.

For the great white star had heard
 Her silent lover's speech ;
 It needed no passionate word
 To pledge them each to each.
 O lady fair and far,
 Hear, oh, hear, and apply !
 Thou the beautiful Star—
 The voiceless Silence, I.

TIME AND LOVE

TIME flies. The swift hours hurry by
And speed us on to untried ways ;
New seasons ripen, perish, die,
And yet love stays.
The old, old love—like sweet at first,
At last like bitter Wine—
I know not if it blest or curst,
Thy life and mine.

Time flies. In vain our prayers, our tears,
We cannot tempt him to delays ;
Down to the past he bears the years,
And yet love stays.
Through changing task and varying dream
We hear the same refrain,
As one can hear a plaintive theme
Run through each strain.

Time flies. He steals our pulsing youth,
He robs us of our care-free days,
He takes away our trust and truth,
And yet love stays.
O Time ! take love ! When love is vain,
When all its best joys die—
When only its regrets remain—
Let love, too, fly.

CHANGE

CHANGED ? Yes, I will confess it—I have changed.

I do not love you in the old fond way.
I am your friend still—time has not estranged
One kindly feeling of that vanished day.

But the bright glamour which made life a dream,
The rapture of that time, its sweet content,
Like visions of a sleeper's brain they seem—
And yet I cannot tell you how they went.

Why do you gaze with such accusing eyes
Upon me, dear ? Is it so very strange
That hearts, like all things underneath God's skies,
Should sometimes feel the influence of change ?

The birds, the flowers, the foliage of the trees,
The stars which seem so fixed, and so sublime,
Vast continents, and the eternal seas,—
All these do change, with ever-changing time.

The face our mirror shows us year on year
Is not the same ; our dearest aim, or need,
Our lightest thought, or feeling, hope, or fear,
All, all the law of alternation heed.

How can we ask the human heart to stay,
Content with fancies of Youth's earliest hours ?
The year outgrows the violets of May,
Although, maybe, there are no fairer flowers.

And life may hold no sweeter love than this,
Which lies so cold, so voiceless, and so dumb
And will I miss it, dear ? Why, yes, we miss
The violets always—till the roses come !

DESOLATION

I THINK that the bitterest sorrow or pain
Of love unrequited, or cold death's woe,
Is sweet, compared to that hour when we know
That some grand passion is on the wane.

When we see that the glory, and glow, and grace
Which lent a splendour to night and day,
Are surely fading, and showing the grey
And dull groundwork of the commonplace.

When fond expressions on dull ears fall,
When the hands clasp calmly without one thrill,
When we cannot muster by force of will
The old emotions that came at call.

When the dream has vanished we fain would keep,
When the heart, like a watch, runs out of gear,
And all the savour goes out of the year,
Oh, then is the time—if we could—to weep !

But no tears soften this dull, pale woe ;
We must sit and face it with dry, sad eyes.
If we seek to hold it, the swifter joy flies—
We can only be passive, and let it go.

ISAURA

DOST thou not tire, Isaura, of this play ?
What play ? Why, this old play of winning
hearts !

Nay, now, lift not thine eyes in that feigned way ;
'Tis all in vain—I know thee, and thine arts.

Let us be frank, Isaura. I have made
A study of thee : and while I admire
The practised skill with which thy plans are laid,
I can but wonder if thou dost not tire.

Why, I tire even of Hamlet and Macbeth !
When overlong the season runs, I find
Those master-scenes of passion, blood, and death,
After a time, do pall upon my mind.

Dost thou not tire of lifting up thine eyes
To read the story thou hast read so oft—
Of ardent glances, and deep quivering sighs,
Of haughty faces suddenly grown soft ?

Is it not stale, oh ! very stale, to thee,
The scene that follows ? Hearts are much the same,
The loves of men but vary in degree—
They find no new expressions for the flame.

Thou must know all they utter ere they speak,
As I know Hamlet's part, whoever plays.
Oh, does it not seem sometimes poor and weak ?
I think thou must grow weary of their ways.

I pity thee, Isaura ! I would be
The humblest maiden with her dream untold,
Rather than live a Queen of Hearts, like thee,
And find life's rarest treasures stale and old.

I pity thee ; for now, let come what may,
Fame, glory, riches, yet life will lack all.
Wherewith can salt be salted ? And what way,
Can life be seasoned after love doth pall ?

NOT QUITE THE SAME

NOT quite the same the springtime seems to me,
Since that sad season when in separate ways
Our paths diverged. There are no more such days
As dawned for us in that lost time when we
Dwelt in the realm of dreams, illusive dreams ;
Spring may be just as fair now, but it seems
Not quite the same.

Not quite the same is life, since we two parted,
Knowing it best to go our ways alone.
Fair measures of success we both have known,
And pleasant hours ; and yet something departed

NOT QUITE THE SAME

51

Which gold, nor fame, nor anything we win,
Can all replace. And either life has been
Not quite the same.

Love is not quite the same, although each heart
Has formed new ties, that are both sweet and true;
But that wild rapture, which of old we knew,
Seems to have been a something set apart
With that lost dream. There is no passion, now,
Mixed with this later love, which seems, somehow,
Not quite the same.

Not quite the same am I. My inner being
Reasons and knows that all is for the best.
Yet vague regrets stir always in my breast,
As my soul's eyes turn sadly backward, seeing
The vanished self, that evermore must be,
This side of what we call eternity,
Not quite the same.

FROM THE GRAVE

WHEN the first sere leaves of the year were fall-
ing,
I heard, with a heart that was strangely thrilled,
Out of the grave of a dead Past calling,
A voice I fancied for ever stilled.

All through winter, and spring, and summer
Silence hung over the grave like a pall ;
But, borne on the breath of the last sad comer,
I listen again to the old-time call.

It is only a love of a bygone season,
A senseless folly that mocked at me,
A reckless passion that lacked all reason ;
So I killed it, and hid it where none could see,
I smothered it first to stop its crying,
Then stabbed it through with a good sharp blade ;
And cold and pallid I saw it lying,
And deep—ah ! deep was the grave I made.

But now I know that there is no killing
A thing like Love, for it laughs at Death ;
There is no hushing, there is no stilling
That which is part of your life and breath.
You may bury it deep, and leave behind you
The land, the people that knew your slain ;
It will push the sods from its grave, and find you
On wastes of water or desert plain.

You may hear but tongues of a foreign people
You may list to sounds that are strange and new
But, clear as a silver bell in a steeple,
That voice from the grave shall call to you.

A WALTZ-QUADRILLE

53

You may rouse your pride, you may use your reason
And seem for a space to slay Love so ;
But, all in its own good time and season,
It will rise and follow wherever you go.
You shall sit sometimes, when the leaves are falling,
Alone with your heart, as I sit to-day,
And hear that voice from your dead Past calling
Out of the graves that you hid away.

A WALTZ-QUADRILLE

THE band was playing a waltz-quadrille,
I felt as light as a wind-blown feather,
As we floated away, at the caller's will,
Through the intricate, mazy dance together.
Like mimic armies our lines were meeting,
Slowly advancing, and then retreating,
All decked in their bright array ;
And back and forth to the music's rhyme
We moved together, and all the time
I knew you were going away.

The fold of your strong arm sent a thrill
From heart to brain as we gently glided
Like leaves on the wave of that waltz-quadrille ;
Parted, met, and again divided—

A WALTZ-QUADRILLE

You drifting one way, and I another,
Then suddenly turning and facing each other,
Then off in the blithe *chasse*.
Then airily back to our places swaying,
While every beat of the music seemed saying
That you were going away.

I said to my heart, 'Let us take our fill
Of mirth, and music, and love, and laughter ;
For it all must end with this waltz-quadrille,
And life will be never the same life after.
Oh that the caller might go on calling !
Oh that the music might go on falling
Like a shower of silver spray,
While we whirled on to the vast Forever,
Where no hearts break, and no ties sever,
And no one goes away !'

A clamour, a crash, and the band was still,
'Twas the end of the dream, and the end of the
measure :

The last low notes of that waltz-quadrille
Seemed like a dirge o'er the death of Pleasure.
You said good-night, and the spell was over—
Too warm for a friend, and too cold for a lover—
There was nothing else to say ;
But the lights looked dim, and the dancers weary,
And the music was sad and the hall was dreary,
After you went away.

BEPPPO

WHY art thou sad, my Beppo? But last eve,
Here at my feet, thy dear head on my breast,
I heard thee say thy heart would no more grieve
Or feel the olden *cunni*, and unrest.

What troubles thee? Am I not all thine own—
I, so long sought, so sighed for and so dear?
And do I not live but for thee alone?
‘Thou hast seen Lippo, whom I loved last year!’

Well, what of that? Last year is nought to me—
’Tis swallowed in the ocean of the past,
Art thou not glad ’twas Lippo, and not thee,
Whose brief bright day in that great gulf was cast?

Thy day is all before thee. Let no cloud,
Here in the very morn of our delight,
Drift up from distant foreign skies, to shroud
Our sun of love whose radiance is so bright.

‘Thou art not first?’ Nay, and he who would be
Defeats his own heart’s dearest purpose then.
To truer truth was ever told to thee—
Who has loved most, he best can love again.

If Lippo (and not he alone) has taught
The arts that please thee, wherefore art thou sad?
Since all my vast love-love to thee is brought,
Look up and smile, my Beppo, and be glad.

TIRED

I AM tired to-night, and something,
The wind maybe, or the rain.
Or the cry of a bird in the copse outside,
Has brought back the past and its pain.
And I feel, as ' I sit here thinking,
That the hand of a dead old June
Has reached out hold of my heart's loose strings,
And is drawing them up in tune.

I am tired to-night, and I miss you,
And long for you, love, through tears :
And it seems but to-day that I saw you go—
You, who have gone for years.
And I seem to be newly lonely—
I, who am so much alone :
And the strings of my heart are well in tune,
But they have not the same old tone.

I am tired ; and that old sorrow
Sweeps down the bed of my soul,
As a turbulent river might suddenly break
Away from a dam's control.
It beareth a wreck on its bosom,
A wreck with a snow-white sail,
And the hand on my heart-strings thrums away,
But they only respond with a wail.

THE SPEECH OF SILENCE

67

THE SPEECH OF SILENCE

THE solemn Sea of Silence lies between us ;
I know thou livest, and thou lovest me
And yet I wish some white ship would come sailing
Across the ocean, bearing word from thee

The dead-calm awes me with its awful stillness
No anxious doubts or fears disturb my breast,
I only ask some little wave of language
To stir this vast infinitude of rest.

I am oppressed with this great sense of loving ;
So much I give, so much receive from thee,
Like subtle incense, rising from a censer,
So floats the fragrance of thy love round me.

All speech is poor, and written words unmeaning ;
Yet such I ask, blown hither by some wind,
To give relief to this too perfect knowledge,
The Silence so impresses on my mind.

How poor the love that needeth word or message,
To banish doubt or nourish tenderness !
I ask them but to temper love's convictions
The Silence all too fully doth express.

Too deep the language which the spirit utters ;
Too vast the knowledge which my soul hath stirred ;
Send some white ship across the Sea of Silence,
And interrupt its utterance with a word.

CONVERSION

I HAVE lived this life as the sceptic lives it.
I have said the sweetness was less than the gall;
Praising, nor cursing, the Hand that gives it,
I have drifted aimlessly through it all.
I have scoffed at the tale of a so-called heaven,
I have laughed at the thought of a Supreme Friend;
I have said that it only to man was given
To live, to endure; and to die was the end.

But now I know that a good God reigneth,
Generous-hearted, and kind and true;
Since unto a worm like me He deigneth
To send so royal a gift as you.
Bright as a star you gleam on my bosom,
Sweet as a rose that the wild bee sips;
And I know, my own, my beautiful blossom,
That none but a God could mould such lips.

And I believe, in the fullest measure
That ever a strong man's heart could hold.
In all the tales of heavenly pleasure
By poets sung, or by prophets told;
For in the joy of your shy, sweet kisses,
Your pulsing touch and your languid sigh,
I am filled and thrilled with better blisses
Than ever were claimed for souls on high.

CONVERSION

59

And now I have faith in all the stories
Told of the beauties of unseen lands ;
Of royal splendours and marvellous glories
Of the golden city not made with hands ;
For the silken beauty of falling tresses,
Of lips all dewy and cheeks aglow,
With—what the mind in a half trance guesses,
Of the twin perfection of drifts of snow.

Of limbs like marble, of thigh and shoulder,
Carved like a statue in high relief—
These, as the eyes and the thoughts grow bolder,
Leave no room for an unbelief.
So my lady, my queen most royal,
My scepticism has passed away ;
If you are true to me, true and loyal,
I will believe till the Judgment day.

LOVE'S COMING

SHE had looked for his coming as warriors come,
With the clash of arms and the bugle's call ;
But he came instead with a stealthy tread,
Which she did not hear at all.

She had thought how his armour would blaze in the sun,
As he rode like a prince to claim his bride :
In the sweet dim light of the falling night
She found him at her side.

She had dreamed how the gaze of his strange, bold eye
Would wake her heart to a sudden glow ;
She found in his face the familiar grace
Of a friend she used to know.

She had dreamed how his coming would stir her soul,
As the ocean is stirred by the wild storm's strife :
He brought her the balm of a heavenly calm,
And a peace which crowned her life.

OLD AND NEW

LONG have the poets vaunted, in their lays,
Old times, old loves, old friendship, and old
wine.

Why should the old monopolise all praise ?
Then let the new claim mine.

Give me strong new friends, when the old prove weak,
Or fail me in my darkest hour of need ;
Why perish with the ship that springs a leak,
Or lean upon a reed ?

Give me new love, warm, palpitating, sweet,
When all the grace and beauty leaves the old ;
When like a rose it withers at my feet,
Or like a hearth grows cold.

Give me new times, bright with a prosperous cheer,
In place of old, tear-blotted, burdened days ;
I hold a sunlit present far more dear,
And worthy of my praise.

When the old creeds are threadbare, and worn through,
And all too narrow for the broadening soul,
Give me the fine, firm texture of the new,
Fair, beautiful, and whole !

PERFECTNESS

ALL perfect things are saddening in effect,
The autumn wood robed in its scarlet clothes,
The matchless tinting on the royal rose
Whose velvet leaf by no least flaw is flecked ;
Love's supreme moment, when the soul unchecked
Soars high as heaven, and its best rapture knows,
These hold a deeper pathos than our woes,
Since they leave nothing better to expect.

Resistless change, when powerless to improve,
Can only mar. The gold will pale to grey—
No thing remains to-morrow as to-day,—
The rose will not seem quite so fair, and love
Must find its measures of delight made less.
Ah, how imperfect is all Perfectness !

BLEAK WEATHER

DEAR Love, where the red lilies blossomed and
grew

The white snows are falling ;
And all through the woods where I wandered with you
The loud winds are calling ;
And the robin that piped to us tune upon tune,
'Neath the oak, you remember,
O'er hilltop and forest has followed the June
And left us December.

He has left like a friend who is true in the sun
And false in the shadows ;
He has found new delights in the land where he's gone,
Greener woodlands and meadows.
Let him go ! what care we ? let the snow shroud the
lea,
Let it drift on the heather ;
We can sing through it all : I have you, you have me,
And we'll laugh at the weather.

The old year may die and a new year be born
That is bleaker and colder :
It cannot dismay us ; we dare it, we scorn,
For our love makes us bolder.

ATTRACTION

63

Ah, Robin ! sing loud on your far-distant lea,
You friend in fair weather !
But here is a song sung that's fuller of glee
By two warm hearts together.

ATTRACTION

THE meadow and the mountain with desire
Gazed on each other, till a fierce unrest
Surged 'neath the meadow's seemingly calm breast,
And all the mountain's fissures ran with fire.

A mighty river rolled between them there.
What could the mountain do but gaze and burn ?
What could the meadow do but look and yearn,
And gem its bosom to conceal despair ?

Their seething passion agitated space,
Till lo ! the lands a sudden earthquake shook,
The river fled : the meadow leaped, and took
The leaning mountain in a close embrace.

GRACIA

NAY, nay, Antonio ! nay, thou shalt not blame her,
My Gracia, who hath so deserted me.
Thou art my friend ; but if thou dost defame her
I shall not hesitate to challenge thee.

'Curse and forget her?' so I might another
One not so bounteous natured or so fair;
But she, Antonio, she was like no other—
I curse her not, because she was so rare.

She was made out of laughter and sweet kisses:
Not blood, but sunshine, through her blue veins ran;
Her soul spilled over with its wealth of blisses,—
She was too great for loving but a man

None but a god could keep so rare a creature—
I blame her not for her inconstancy:
When I recall each radiant smile, and feature,
I wonder she so long was true to me.

Call her not false or fickle. I, who love her,
Do hold her not unlike the royal sun,
That, all unmated, roams the wide world over
And lights all worlds, but lingers not with one.

If she were less a goddess, more a woman,
And so had dallied for a time with me,
And then had left me, I, who am but human,
Would slay her, and her newer love, maybe.

But since she seeks Apollo, or another
Of those lost gods (and seeks him all in vain),
And has loved me as well as any other
Of her men-lovers, why I do not complain.

AD FINEM

IN the white throat of the useless passion
That scorched my soul with its burning breath,
I clutched my fingers in murderous fashion,
And gathered them close in a grip of death ;
For why should I fan, or feed with fuel,
A love that showed me but blank despair ?
So my hold was firm, and my grasp was cruel—
I meant to strangle it then and there !

I thought it was dead. But with no warning,
It rose from its grave last night, and came
And stood by my bed till the early morning,
And over and over it spoke your name.
Its throat was red where my hands had held it,
It burned my brow with its scorching breath ;
And I said, the moment my eyes beheld it,
'A love like this can know no death.'

For just one kiss that your lips have given
In the lost and beautiful past to me,
I would gladly barter my hopes of Heaven
And all the bliss of Eternity.
For never a joy are the angels keeping
To lay at my feet in Paradise,
Like that of into your strong arms creeping,
And looking into your love-lit eyes.

I know, in the way that sins are reckoned,
This thought is a sin of the deepest dye ;
But I know, too, if an angel beckoned,
Standing close by the Throne on High,
And you, adown by the gates infernal,
Should open your loving arms and smile,
I would turn my back on things supernal,
To lie on your breast a little while.

To know for an hour you were mine completely—
Mine in body and soul, my own—
I would bear unending tortures sweetly,
With not a murmur and not a moan.
A lighter sin or a lesser error
Might change through hope or fear divine—
But there is no fear, and hell has no terror
To change or alter a love like mine.

NEW AND OLD

I AND new love, in all its living bloom,
Sat *vis-à-vis*, while tender twilight hours
Went softly by us, treading as on flowers.
Then suddenly I saw within the room
The old love, long since lying in its tomb.
It dropped the cerecloth from its fleshless face
And smiled on me, with a remembered grace
That, like the noontide, lit the gloaming's gloom.

THE TRIO

67

Upon its shroud there hung the grave's green mould,
About it hung the odour of the dead ;
Yet from its cavernous eyes such light was shed
That all my life seemed gilded, as with gold ;
Unto the trembling new love ' Go,' I said,
' I do not need thee, for I have the old.'

THE TRIO

WE love but once. The great gold orb of light
From dawn to eventide doth cast his ray ;
But the full splendour of his perfect might
Is reached but once throughout the livelong day.

We love but once. The waves, with ceaseless motion,
Do day and night plash on the pebbled shore ;
But the strong tide of the resistless ocean
Sweeps in but one hour of the twenty-four.

We love but once A score of times, perchance,
We may be moved in fancy's fleeting fashion—
May treasure up a word, a tone, a glance,
But only once we feel the soul's great passion.

We love but once. Love walks with death and birth
(The saddest, the unkindest of the three) ;
And only once while we sojourn on earth
Can that strange trio come to you or me.

AN ANSWER

IF all the year was summer-time,
And all the aim of life
Was just to lilt on like a rhyme—
Then I would be your wife.

If all the days were August days,
And crowned with golden weather,
How happy then through green-clad ways
We two could stray together !

If all the nights were moonlit nights,
And we had nought to do
But just to sit and plan delights,
Then I would wed with you.

If life was all a summer fête,
Its soberest pace the 'glide,'
Then I would choose you for my mate,
And keep you at my side.

But winter makes full half the year,
And labour half of life,
And all the laughter and good cheer
Give place to wearing strife.

Days will grow cold, and moons wax old,
And then a heart that's true
Is better far than grace or gold—
And so, my love, adieu !
I cannot wed with you

YOU WILL FORGET ME

69

YOU WILL FORGET ME

YOU will forget me. The years are so tender,
They bind up the wounds which we think are
so deep ;

This dream of our youth will fade out as the splendour
Fades from the skies when the sun sinks to sleep ;
The cloud of forgetfulness, over and over
Will banish the last rosy colours away,
And the fingers of Time will weave garlands to cover
The scar which you think is a life-mark to-day.

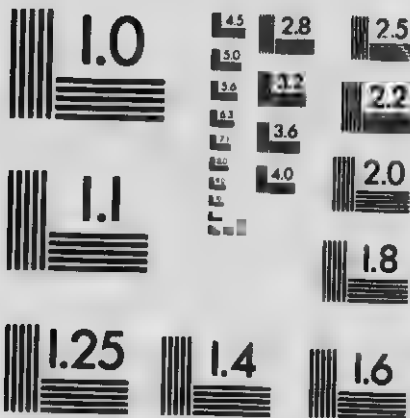
You will forget me. The one boon you covet
Now above all things will soon seem no prize,
And the heart, which you hold not in keeping to prove it
True or untrue, will lose worth in your eyes.
The one drop to-day, that you deem only wanting
To fill your life-cup to the brim, soon will seem
But a valueless mite ; and the ghost that is haunting
The aisles of your heart will pass out with the dream.

You will forget me ; will thank me for saying
The words which you think are so pointed with pain.
Time loves a new lay ; and the dirge he is playing
Will change for you soon to a livelier strain.
I shall pass from your life—I shall pass out for ever,
And these hours we have spent will be sunk in the past.
Youth buries its dead ; grief kills seldom or never—
And forgetfulness covers all sorrows at last.



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THE FAREWELL OF CLARIMONDE

(SUGGESTED BY THE 'CLARIMONDE' OF THÉOPHILE
GAUTIER)

A DIEU, Romauld ! But thou canst not forget me,
Although no more I haunt thy dreams at night,
Thy hungering heart for ever must regret me,
And starve for those lost moments of delight.

Nought shall avail thy priestly rights and duties—
Nor fears of hell, nor hopes of heaven beyond ;
Before the Cross shall rise my fair form's beauties—
The lips, the limbs, the eyes of Clarimonde.

Like gall the wine sipped from the sacred chalice
Shall taste to one who knew my red mouth's bliss :
When Youth and Beauty dwelt in Love's own palace,
And life flowed on in one eternal kiss.

Through what strange ways I come, dear heart, to reach
thee,
From viewless lands, by paths no man e'er trod !
I braved all fears, all dangers dared, to teach thee
A love more mighty than thy love of God.

Think not in all His Kingdom to discover
Such joys, Romauld, as ours, when fierce yet fond
I clasped thee—kissed thee—crowned thee my one lover :
Thou canst not find another Clarimonde.

THE FAREWELL OF CLARIMONDE 71

I knew all arts of love : he who possessed me
Possessed all women, and could never tire :
A new life dawned for him who once caressed me !
Satiety itself I set on fire.

Inconstancy I chained : men died to win me ;
Kings cast by crowns for one hour on my breast,
And all the passionate tide of love within me
I gave to thee, Romauld. Wert thou not blest ?

Yet, for the love of God, thy hand hath riven
Our welded souls. But not in prayer well conned,
Not in thy dearly purchased peace of heaven,
Canst thou forget those hours with Clarimonde.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

THE LOST GARDEN

THERE was a fair green garden sloping
From the south-east side of the mountain-ledge;
And the earliest tint of the dawn came groping
Down through its paths, from the day's dim edge.
The bluest skies and the reddest roses
Arched and varied its velvet sod ;
And the glad birds sang, as the soul supposes
The angels sing on the hills of God.

I wandered there when my veins seemed bursting
With life's rare rapture, and keen delight ;
And yet in my heart was a constant thirsting
For something over the mountain-height.
I wanted to stand in the blaze of glory
That turned to crimson the peaks of snow,
And the winds from the west all breathed a story
Of realms and regions I longed to know.

I saw on the garden's south side growing
The brightest blossoms that breathe of June,
I saw in the east how the sun was glowing,
And the gold air shook with a wild bird's tune ;

THE LOST GARDEN

73

I heard the drip of a silver fountain,
And the pulse of a young laugh throbbed with glee;
But still I looked out over the mountain
Where unnamed wonders awaited me.

I came at last to the western gateway
That led to the path I longed to climb;
But a shadow fell on my spirit straightway,
For close at my side stood greybeard Time,
I paused, with feet that were fain to linger
Hard by that garden's golden gate;
But Time spoke, pointing with one stern finger;
'Pass on,' he said, 'for the day grows late.'

And now on the chill grey cliffs I wander;
The heights recede which I thought to find,
And the light seems dim on the mountain yonder,
When I think of the garden I left behind.
Should I stand at last on its summ' splendour,
I know full well it would not repay
For the fair lost tints of the dawn so tender
That crept up over the edge o' day.

I would go back, but the ways are winding,
If ways there are to that land, in sooth;
For what man succeeds in ever finding
A path to the garden of his lost youth?

But I think sometimes, when the June stars glisten,
That a rose-scent drifts from far away ;
And I know, when I lean from the cliffs and listen,
That a young laugh breaks on the air like spray.

ART AND HEART

THOUGH critics may bow to art, and I am its
own true lover,

It is not art, but heart, which wins the wide world over.

Though smooth be the heartless prayer, no ear in heaven
will mind it,

And the finest phrase falls dead, if there is no feeling
behind it.

Though perfect the player's touch, little if any he
sways us,

Unless we feel his heart throb through the music he
plays us.

Though the poet may spend his life in skilfully round-
ing a measure,

Unless he writes from a full warm heart, he gives us
little pleasure.

So it is not the speech which tells, but the impulse
which goes with the saying,

And it is not the words of the prayer, but the yearning
back of the praying.

ART AND HEART

75

It is not the artist's skill, which into our soul comes
stealing,

Which is a joy that is almost pain, but it is the player's
feeling.

And it is not the poet's song, though sweeter than sweet
bells chiming,

Which thrills us through and through, but the heart
which beats under the rhyming.

And therefore I say again, though I am art's own true
lover,

That it is not art, but heart, which wins the wide world
over.

AS BY FIRE

SOMETIMES I feel so passionate a yearning
For spiritual perfection here below,
This vigorous frame, with healthful fervour burning,
Seems my determined foe.

So actively it makes a stern resistance,
So cruelly sometimes it wages war
Against a wholly spiritual existence
Which I am striving for.

It interrupts my soul's intense devotions,
Some hope it strangles of divinest birth,
With a swift rush of violent emotions
Which link me to the earth.

It is as if two mortal foes contended
Within my bosom in a deadly strife,
One for the loftier aims for souls intended,
One for the earthly life.

And yet I know this very war within me,
Which brings out all my will-power and control ;
This very conflict at the last shall win me
The loved and longed-for goal.

The very fire which seems sometimes so cruel
Is the white light, that shows me my own strength :
A furnace fed by the divinest fuel
It may become at length.

Ah ! when in the immortal ranks enlisted,
I sometimes wonder if we shall not find
That not by deeds, but by what we've resisted,
Our places are assigned.

IF I SHOULD DIE

XXXXXXXX

IF I should die, how kind you all would grow !
In that strange hour I would not have one foe.
There are no words too beautiful to say
Of one who goes for evermore away
Across that ebbing tide which has no flow.

MISALLIANCE

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With what new lustre my good deeds would glow !
If faults were mine, no one would call them so,
Or speak of me in aught but praise that day,
If I should die.

Ah friends ! before my listening ear lies low,
While I can hear and understand, bestow
That gentle treatment and fond love, I pray,
The lustre of whose late though radiant way
Would gild my grave with mocking light, I know,
If I should die.

MISALLIANCE

I AM troubled to-night with a curious pain ;
It is not of the flesh, it is not of the brain,
Nor yet of an heart that is breaking :
But down still deeper, and out of sight—
In the place where the soul and body unite—
There lies the seat of the aching.

They have been lovers, in days gone by ;
But the soul is fickle, and longs to fly
From the fettering misalliance :
And she tears at the bonds which are binding her so,
And pleads with the body to let her go,
But he will not yield compliance.

For the body loves, as he loved in the past
 When he wedded her soul; and he holds her fast,
 And swears that he will not loose her;
 That he will keep her and hide her-away
 For ever and ever and for a day
 From the arms of Death, the seducer.

Ah! this is the strife that is wearying me--
 The strife 'twixt a soul that would be free
 And a body that will not let her.
 And I say to my soul, 'Be calm, and wait
 For I tell ye truly that soon or late
 Ye surely shall drop each fetter.'

And I say to the body, 'Be kind, I pray;
 For the soul is not of thy mortal clay,
 But is formed in spirit fashion.'
 And still through the hours of the solemn night
 I can hear my sad soul's plea for flight,
 And my body's reply of passion.

RESPONSE

I SAID this morning, as I leaned and threw
 My shutters open to the Spring's surprise,
 'Tell me, O earth, how is it that in you
 Year after year the same fresh feelings rise?
 How do you keep your young exultant glee?
 No more those sweet emotions come to me.

'I note through all your fissures, how the tide
Of healthful life goes leaping as of old.
Your royal dawns retain their pomp and pride;
Your sunsets lose no atom of their gold.
How can this wonder be? My soul's fine ear
Leaned, listening, till a small voice answered near—

'My days lapse never over into night;
My nights encroach not on the rights of dawn.
I rush not breathless after some delight;
I waste no grief for any pleasure gone,
My July noons burn not the entire year.
Heart, hearken well! Yes, yes; go on; I hear.

'I do not strive to make my sunsets' gold
Pave all the dim and distant realms of space.
I do not bid my crimson dawns unfold
To lend the midnight a fictitious grace.
I break no law, for all God's laws are good.
Heart, hast thou heard? Yes, yes, and understood.

DROUGHT

WHY do we pity those who weep? The pain
That finds a ready outlet in the flow
Of salt and bitter tears is blessed woe,
And does not need our sympathies. The rain

THE CREED

But fits the shorn field for new yield of grain :
 While the red brazen skies, the sun's fierce glow,
 The dry, hot winds that from the tropics blow,
 Do parch and wither the unsheltered plain.
 The anguish that through long, remorseless years
 Looks out upon the world with no relief,
 Of sudden tempests or slow dripping tears,—
 The still, unuttered, silent, wordless grief
 That evermore doth ache, and ache, and ache,—
 This is the sorrow wherewith hearts do break.

THE CREED

WHOEVER was begotten by pure love,
 And came desired and welcomed into life,
 Is of immaculate conception. He
 Whose heart is full of tenderness and truth,
 Who loves mankind more than he loves himself,
 And cannot find room in his heart for hate,

May be another Christ: We all may be
 The Saviours of the world, if we believe
 In the Divinity which dwells in us
 And worship it, and nail our grosser selves,
 Our tempers, greeds, and our unworthy aims,
 Upon the cross. Who giveth love to all,

PROGRESS

81

Pays kindness for unkindness, smiles for frowns,
And lends new courage to each fainting heart,
And strengthens hope and scatters joy abroad,
He, too, is a Redeemer, Son of God.

PROGRESS

LET there be many windows to your soul,
That all the glory of the universe
May beautify it. Not the narrow pane
Of one poor creed can catch the radiant rays
That shine from countless sources. Tear away
The blinds of superstition ; let the light
Pour through fair windows broad as Truth itself
And high as God.

Why should the spirit peer
Through some priest-curtained orifice, and gaze
Along dim corridors of doubt, when all
The splendour from unfathomed seas of space
Might bathe it with the golden waves of Love ?
Sweep up the débris of decaying faiths ;
Sweep down the cobwebs of worn-out beliefs,
And thrown your soul wide open to the light
Of Reason and of Knowledge. Tune your ear
To all the wordless music of the stars
And to the voice of Nature, and your heart

Shall turn to truth and goodness, as the plant
Turns to the sun. A thousand unseen hands
Reach down to help you to their peace-crowned
heights,
And all the forces of the firmament
Shall fortify your strength. Be not afraid
To thrust aside half-truths and grasp the whole.

MY FRIEND

WHEN first I looked upon the face of Pain
I shrank repelled, as one shrinks from a foe
Who stands with dagger poised, as for a blow.
I was in search of Pleasure and of Gain ;
I turned aside to let him pass : in vain ;
He looked straight into my eyes and would not go.
' Shake hands,' he said, ' our paths are one, and so
We must be comrades on the way, 'tis plain.'

I felt the firm grasp of his hand on mine ;
Through all my veins it sent a strengthening glow.
I straightway linked my arm in his, and lo !
He led me forth to joys almost divine ;
With God's great truths enriched me in the end,
And now I hold him as my dearest friend.

RED CARNATIONS

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RED CARNATIONS

ONE time in Arcadie's fair bowers
There met a bright immortal band,
To choose their emblems from the flowers
That made an Eden of that land.

Sweet Constancy, with eyes of hope,
Strayed down the garden path alone,
And gathered sprays of heliotrope,
To place in clusters at her zone.

True Friendship plucked the ivy green,
For ever fresh, for ever fair.
Inconstancy with flippant mien
The fading primrose chose to wear.

One moment Love the rose paused by
But Beauty picked it for her hair.
Love paced the garden with a sigh,—
He found no fitting emblem there.

Then suddenly he saw a flame,
A conflagration turned to bloom ;
It even put the rose to shame,
Both in its beauty and perfume.

He watched it, and it did not fade :
He plucked it, and it brighter grew.
In cold or heat, all undismayed,
It kept its fragrance and its hue.

LIFE IS TOO SHORT

'Here deathless love and passion sleep,'
 He cried, 'embodied in this flower.
 This is the emblem I will keep.'
 Love wore carnations from that hour.

LIFE IS TOO SHORT

LIFE is too short for any vain regretting ;
 Let dead delight bury its dead, I say,
 And let us go upon our way forgetting
 The joys, and sorrows, of each yesterday,
 Between the swift sun's rising and its setting,
 We have no time for useless tears or fretting,
 Life is too short.

Life is too short for any bitter feeling ;
 Time is the best avenger if we wait.
 The years speed by, and on their wings bear healing,
 We have no room for anything like hate.
 This solemn truth the low mounds seem revealing
 That thick and fast about our feet are stealing,
 Life is too short.

Life is too short for aught but high endeavour,—
 Too short for spite, but long enough for love.
 And love lives on for ever and for ever,
 It links the worlds that circle on above :
 'Tis God's first law, the universe's lever.
 In His vast realm the radiant souls sigh never
 'Life is too short.'

A SCULPTOR

AS the ambitious sculptor, tireless, lifts
Chisel and hammer to the block at hand,
Before my half-formed character I stand
And ply the shining tools of mental gifts.
I'll cut away a huge unsightly side
Of selfishness, and smooth to curves of grace
The angles of ill-temper.

And no trace
Shall my sure hammer leave of silly pride.
Chip after chip must fall from vain desires,
And the sharp corners of my discontent
Be rounded into symmetry, and lent
Great harmony by faith that never tires.
Unfinished still, I must toil on and on,
Till the pale critic, Death, shall say, "Tis done."

CREATION

THE impulse of all love is to create.
God was so full of love, in His embrace
He clasped the empty nothingness of space,
And lo ! the solar system ! High in state

The mighty sun sat, so supreme and great
With this same essence, one smile of its face
Brought myriad forms of life forth ; race on race
From insects up to men.

Through love, not hate,
All that is grand in nature or in art
Sprang into being. He who would build sublime
And lasting works, to stand the test of time,
Must inspiration draw from his full heart.
And he who loveth widely, well and much,
The secret holds of the true master touch.

BEYOND

IT seemeth such a little way to me
Across to that strange country—the Beyond ;
And yet, not strange, for it has grown to be
The home of those of whom I am so fond,
They make it seem familiar and most dear,
As journeying friends bring distant regions near.

So close it lies, that when my sight is clear
I think I almost see the gleaming strand.
I know I feel those who have gone from here
Come near enough sometimes, to touch my hand.
I often think, but for our veiled eyes,
We should find heaven right round about us lies

BEYOND

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I cannot make it seem a day to dread,
When from this dear earth I shall journey out
To that still dearer country of the dead,
And join the lost ones, so long dreamed about.
I love this world, yet shall I love to go
And meet the friends who wait for me, I know.

I never stand above a bier and see
The seal of death set on some well-loved face
But that I think, 'One more to welcome me,
When I shall cross the intervening space
Between this land and that one "over there";
One more to make the strange Beyond seem fair.'

And so for me there is no sting to death,
And so the grave has lost its victory.
It is but crossing—with a bated breath,
And white, set face—a little strip of sea,
To find the loved ones waiting on the shore,
More beautiful, more precious than before.

THE SADDEST HOUR

THE saddest hour of anguish and of loss
Is not that season of supreme despair
When we can find no least light anywhere
To gild the dread, black shadow of the Cross.

SHOW ME THE WAY

Not in that luxury of sorrow when
We sup on salt of tears, and drink the gall
Of memories of days beyond recall—
Of lost delights that cannot come again.

But when, with eyes that are no longer wet,
We look out on the great, wide world of men
And, smiling, lean toward a bright to-morrow,
Then backward shrink, with sudden kee · regret,
To find that we are learning to forget :
Ah ! then we face the saddest hour of sorrow.

SHOW ME THE WAY

SHOW me the way that leads to the true life.
I do not care what tempests may assail me,
I shall be given courage for the strife,
I know my strength will not desert or fail me ;
I know that I shall conquer in the fray ;
Show me the way.

Show me the way up to a higher plane,
Where body shall be servant to the soul.
I do not care what tides of woe, or pain,
Across my life their angry waves may roll,
If I but reach the end I seek some day :
Show me the way.

SHOW ME THE WAY

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Show me the way, and let me bravely climb
Above vain grievings for unworthy treasures ;
Above all sorrow that finds balm in time—
Above small triumphs, or belittling pleasures ;
Up to those heights where these things seem child's
play :

Show me the way.

Show me the way to that calm, perfect peace
Which springs from an inward consciousness of right,
To where all conflicts with the flesh shall cease,
And self shall radiate with the spirit's light.
Though hard the journey and the strife, I pray
Show me the way.

MY HERITAGE

I INTO life so full of love was sent,
That all the shadows which fall on the way
Of every human being could not stay,
But fled before the light my spirit lent.

I saw the world through gold and crimson dyes :
Men sighed, and said, ' Those rosy hues will fade
As you pass on into the glare and shade !'
Still beautiful the way seems to mine eyes.

They said, 'You are too jubilant and glad ;
 The world is full of sorrow and of wrong.
 Full soon your lips shall breathe forth sighs—not
 song !'

The day wears on, and yet I am not sad

They said, 'You love too largely, and you must
 Through wound on wound, grow bitter to your
 kind.'

They were false prophets : day by day I find
 More cause for love, and less cause for distrust

They said, 'Too free you give your soul's rare wine ;
 The world will quaff, but it will not repay.'
 Yet into the emptied flagons, day by day,
 True hearts pour back a nectar as divine.

Thy heritage ! Is it not love's estate ?
 Look to it, then, and keep its soil well tilled.
 I hold that my best wishes are fulfilled
 Because I love so much, and cannot hate.

RESOLVE

BUILD on resolve, and not upon regret,
 The structure of thy future. Do not grope
 Among the shadows of old sins, but let
 Thine own soul's light shine on the path of hope
 And dissipate the darkness. Waste no tears
 Upon the blotted record of lost years,

AT ELEUSIS

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But turn the leaf, and smile, oh ! smile, to see
The fair white pages that remain for thee.

Prate not of thy repentance. But believe
The spark divine dwells in thee : let it grow.
That which the upreaching spirit can achieve,
The grand and all creative forces know ;
They will assist and strengthen as the light
Lifts up the acorn to the oak-tree's height.
Thou hast but to resolve, and lo ! God's whole
Great universe shall fortify thy soul.

AT ELEUSIS

I AT Eleusis saw the finest sight,
When early morning's banners were unfurled,
From high Olympus gazing on the world,
The ancient gods once saw it with delight.
Sad Demeter had in a single night
Removed her sombre garments ! and mine eyes
Beheld a 'brodered mantle in pale dyes
Thrown o'er her throbbing bosom. Sweet and clear,
There fell the sound of music on mine ear.
And from the South came Hermes, he whose lyre
One time appeased the great Apollo's ire.
The rescued maid, Persephone, by the hand,
He led to waiting Demeter, and cheer
And light and beauty once more blessed the land.

COURAGE

THERE is a courage, a majestic thing
That springs forth from the brow of pain,
full grown,

Minerva-like, and dares all dangers known,
And all the threatening future yet may bring ;
Crowned with the helmet of great suffering.

Serene with that grand strength by martyrs shown
When at the stake they die and make us music,
And even as the flames leap up are heard to sing
A courage so sublime and unafraid.

It wears its sorrows like a coat of mail ;
And Fate, the archer, passes by dismayed.

Knowing his best barbed arrows needs must fail
To pierce a soul so armoured and arrayed
That Death himself might look on it and quail.

SOLITUDE

LAUGH, and the world laughs with you ;
Weep, and you weep alone ;

For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth,

But has trouble enough of its own.

Sing, and the hills will answer ;

Sigh, it is lost on the air ;

The echoes bound to a joyful sound,

But shrink from voicing care.

Rejoice, and men will seek you;
Grieve, and they turn and go;
They want full measure of all your pleasure,
But they do not need your woe.
Be glad, and your friends are many;
Be sad, and you lose them all,—
There are none to decline your nectared wine,
But alone you must drink life's gall.

Feast, and your halls are crowded;
Fast, and the world goes by.
Succeed and give, and it helps you live,
But no man can help you die.
There is room in the halls of pleasure
For a large and lordly train,
But one by one we must all file on
Through the narrow aisles of pain.

THE YEAR OUTGROWS THE SPRING

THE year outgrows the spring it thought so sweet
And clasps the summer with a new delight,
Yet wearied, leaves her languors and her heat
When cool-browed autumn dawns upon his sight.

The tree outgrows the bud's suggestive grace
And feels new pride in blossoms fully blown.
But even this to deeper joy gives place
When bending boughs 'neath blushing burdens groan

94 THE YEAR OUTGROWS THE SPRING

Life's rarest moments are derived from change,
The heart outgrows old happiness, old grief,
And suns itself in feelings new and strange.
The most enduring pleasure is but brief.

Our tastes, our needs, are never twice the same.
Nothing contents us long, however dear.
The spirit in us, like the grosser frame,
Outgrows the garments which it wore last year.

Change is the watchword of Progression. When
We tire of well-worn ways, we seek for new.
This restless craving in the souls of men
Spurs them to climb, and seek the mountain view.

So let who will erect an altar shrine
To meek-browed Constancy, and sing her praise;
Unto enlivening Change I shall build mine,
Who lends new zest, and interest to my days.

THE BEAUTIFUL LAND OF NOD

COME, cuddle your head on my shoulder, dear,
Your head like the golden-rod,
And we will go sailing away from here
To the beautiful Land of Nod.
Away from life's hurry, and flurry, and worry,
Away from earth's shadows and gloom,
To a world of fair weather we'll float off together
Where roses are always in bloom.

THE BEAUTIFUL LAND OF NOD 95

Just shut up your eyes, and fold your hands,
Your hands like the leaves of a rose,
And we will go sailing to those fair lands
That never an atlas shows.
On the North and the West they are bounded by rest
On the South and the East by dreams ;
'Tis the country ideal, where nothing is real,
But everything only seems.

Just drop down the curtains of your dear eyes,
Those eyes like a bright blue-bell,
And we will sail out under starlit skies
To the land where the fairies dwell.
Down the river of sleep our barque shall sweep,
Till it reaches that mystical isle
Which no man hath seen, but where all have been,
And there we will pause awhile.
I will croon you a song as we float along,
To that shore that is blessed of God,
Then ho ! for that fair land, we're off for the rare land
That beautiful Land of Nod.

THE TIGER

IN the still jungle of the senses lay
A tiger soundly sleeping, till one day
A bold young hunter chanced to come that way.

'How calm,' he said, 'that splendid creature lies!
 I long to rouse him into swift surprise.'
 A well-aimed arrow, shot from amorous eyes,

And lo! the tiger rouses up and turns,
 A coal of fire his glowing eyeball burns,
 His mighty frame with savage hunger yearns.

He crouches for a spring: his eyes dilate—
 Alas! bold hunter, what shall be thy fate?
 Thou canst not fly, it is too late, too late.

Once having tasted human flesh, ah! then,
 Woe, woe unto the whole rash world of men,
 The wakened tiger will not sleep again.

ONLY A SIMPLE RHYME

ONLY a simple rhyme of love and sorrow,
 Where 'blisses' rhymed with 'kisses,' 'heart'
 with 'dart.'

Yet reading it, new strength I seemed to borrow,
 To live on bravely, and to do my part.

A little rhyme about a heart that's bleeding—
 Of lonely hours, and sorrow's unrelief.
 I smiled at first; but there came with the reading,
 A sense of sweet companionship in grief.

ONLY A SIMPLE RHYME

97

The selfishness of my own woe forsaking,
I thought about the singer of that song.
Some other breast felt this same weary aching,
Another found the summer days too long.

The few sad lines, my sorrow so expressing,
I read, and on the singer, all unknown,
I breathed a fervent, though a silent, blessing,
And seemed to clasp his hand within my own.

And though fame pass him, and he never know it,
And though he never sings another strain,
He has performed the mission of the poet,
In helping some sad heart to bear its pain.

I WILL BE WORTHY OF IT

I MAY not reach the heights I seek,
My untried strength may fail me ;
Or, half-way up the mountain peak
Fierce tempests may assail me.
But though that place I never gain,
Herein lies comfort for my pain—
I will be worthy of it.

I may not triumph in success,
Despite my earnest labour ;
I may not grasp results that bless
The efforts of my neighbour.

But though my goal I never see,
This thought shall always dwell with me—
I will be worthy of it.

The golden glory of Love's light
May never fall on my way ;
My path may always lead through night,
Like some deserted by-way.
But though life's dearest joy I miss,
There lies a nameless strength in this—
I will be worthy of it.

SONNET

METHINKS oft times my heart is like some bee
That goes forth through the summer day and
sings,

And gathers honey from all growing things
In garden plot, or on the clover lea.
When the long afternoon grows late, and she
Would seek her hive, she cannot lift her wings,
So heavily the too sweet burden clings,
From which she would not, and yet would, fly free.
So with my full fond heart ; for when it tries
To lift itself to peace-crowned heights, above
The common way where countless feet have trod,
Lo ! then, this burden of dear human ties,
This growing weight of precious earthly love,
Binds down the spirit that would soar to God.

LET ME LEAN HARD

LET me lean hard upon the Eternal Breast;
 In all earth's devious ways, I sought for rest
 And found it not. I will be strong, said I,
 And lean upon myself. I will not cry
 And importune all heaven with my complaint,
 But now my strength fails, and I fall, I faint:
 Let me lean hard.

Let me lean hard upon the unfailing Arm
 I said I will walk on, I fear no harm,
 The spark divine within my soul will show
 The upward pathway where my feet should go
 But now the heights to which I most aspire
 Are lost in clouds. I stumble and I tire:
 Let me lean hard.

Let me lean harder yet. That swerveless Force
 Which speeds the solar systems on their course
 Can take, unfelt, the burden of my woe,
 Which bears me to the dust and hurts me so
 I thought my strength enough for any fate,
 But lo! I sink beneath my sorrow's weight:
 Let me lean hard.

PENALTY

BECAUSE of the fulness of what I had
All that I have seems void and vain.
If I had not been happy, I were not sad ;
Though my salt is savourless, why complain ?
From the ripe perfection of what was mine,
All that is mine seems worse than nought.
Yet I know as I sit in the dark and pine,
No cup could be drained which had not been
fraught.
From the throb, and thrill, of a day that was,
The day that now is seems dull with gloom.
Yet I bear its dulness and darkness because
'Tis but the reaction of glew and bloom.
From the royal feast which of old was spread
I am starved on the diet which now is mine ;
Yet I could not turn hungry from water and bread,
If I had not been sated on fruit and wine.

SUNSET

I saw the day lean o'er the world's sharp edge,
And peer into night's chasm, dark and damp.
High in his hand he held a blazing lamp,
Then dropped it, and plunged headlong down the
ledge.

THE WHEEL OF THE BREAST 101

With lurid splendour that swift paled to grey
I saw the dim skies suddenly flush bright.
'Twas but the expiring glory of the light
Flung from the hand of the adventurous day.

THE WHEEL OF THE BREAST

THROUGH rivers of veins on the nameless quest
The tide of my life goes hurriedly sweeping,
Till it reaches that curious wheel o' the breast,
The human heart, which is never at rest.
Faster, faster, it cries, and leaping,
Plunging, dashing, speeding away,
The wheel and the river work night and day.

I know not wherefore, I know not whither
This strange tide rushes with such mad force ;
It glides on hither, it slides on thither,
Over and over the selfsame course,
With never an outlet and never a source ;
And it lashes itself to the heat of passion
And whirls the heart in mill-wheel fashion.

I can hear in the hush of the still, still night
The ceaseless sound of that mighty river ;
I can hear it gushing, gurgling, rushing
With a wild, delirious, strange delight,
And a conscious pride in its sense of might,
As it hurries and worries my heart for ever.

102 THE WHEEL OF THE BREAST

And I wonder oft as I lie awake,
And list to the river that seethes and surges
Over the wheel that it chides and urges,—
I wonder oft if that wheel will break
With the mighty pressure it bears, some day,
Or slowly and wearily wear away.

For little by little the heart is wearing,
Like the wheel of the mill, as the tide goes tearing
And plunging hurriedly through my breast,
In a network of veins on a nameless quest,
From and forth unto unknown oceans,
Bringing its cargoes of fierce emotions,
With never a pause or an hour for rest.

A MEETING

Q UITE carelessly I turned the newsy sheet:
A song I sang, full many a year ago,
Smiled up at me, as in a busy street
One meets an old-time friend he used to know.

So full it was, that simple little song,
Of all the hope, the transport; and the truth,
Which to the impetuous morn of life belong,
That once again, I seemed to grasp my youth.

A MEETING

103

So full it was of that sweet, fancied pain
We woo and cherish ere we meet with woe
I felt, as one who hears a plaintive strain
His mother sang him in the long ago.

Up from the grave the years that lay between
That song's birthday and my stern present came
Like phantom forms, and swept across the scene,
Bearing their broken dreams of love and fame.

Fair hopes and bright ambitions that I knew
In that old time, with their ideal grace,
Shone for a moment, then were lost to view,
Behind the dull clouds of the commonplace.

With trembling hands I put the sheet away ;
Ah, little song ! the sad and bitter truth
Struck like an arrow when we met that day !
My life has missed the promise of its youth.

EARNESTNESS

THE hurry of the times affects us so
In this swift rushing hour we crowd, and press,
And thrust each other backward, as we go,
And do not pause to lay sufficient stress
Upon that good, strong, true word, Earnestness.
In our impetuous haste, could we but know
Its full, deep meaning, its vast import, oh,
Then might we grasp the secret of success !

A PICTURE

In that receding age when men were great,
The bone and sinew of their purpose lay
In this one word. God likes an earnest soul—
Too earnest to be eager. Soon or late
It leaves the spent horde breathless by the way,
And stands serene, triumphant at the goal.

A PICTURE

I STROLLED last eve across the lonely down,
One solitary picture struck my eye,
A distant ploughboy stood against the sky—
How far he seemed, above the noisy town!

Upon the bosom of a cloud the sod
Laid its bruised cheek, as he moved slowly by.
And, watching him, I asked myself if I
In very truth stood half as near to God.

MOCKERY

WHY do we grudge our sweets so to the living,
Who, God knows, finds at best too much of
gall,
And then with generous open hands kneel, giving
Unto the dead our all?

TWIN-BORN

105

Why do we pierce the warm heart's sin or sorrow
With idle jests, or scorn, or cruel sneers,
And when it cannot know, on some to-morrow,
Speak of its woe through tears ?

What do the dead care for the tender token—
The love, the praise, the floral offerings ?
But palpitating, living hearts are broken
For want of just these things.

TWIN-BORN

HE who possesses virtue at its best,
Or greatness in the true sense of the word,
Has one day started even with that herd
Whose swift feet now speed, but at sin's behest.
It is the same force in the human breast
Which makes men gods or demons. If we gird
Those strong emotions by which we are stirred
With might of will and purpose, heights unguessed
Shall dawn for us ; or if we give them sway,
We can sink down and consort with the lost.
All virtue is worth just the price it cost.
Black sin is oft white truth, that missed its way,
And wandered off in paths not understood.
Twin-born I hold great evil and great good.

FLOODS

IN the dark night, from sweet refreshing sleep
I wake to hear outside my window-pane
The uncurbed fury of the wild spring rain,
And weird winds lashing the defiant deep,
And roar of floods that gather strength and leap
Down dizzy, wreck-strewn channels to the main.
I turn upon my pillow, and again
Compose myself for slumber.

Let them sweep;
I once survived great floods, and do not fear,
Though ominous planets congregate, and seem
To foretell strange disasters.

From a dream—
Ah! dear God! such a dream!—I woke to hear,
Through the dense shadows lit by no star's gleam,
The rush of mighty waters on my ear.
Helpless, afraid, and all alone, I lay;
The floods had come upon me unaware.
I heard the crash of structures that were fair;
The bridges of fond hopes were swept away
By great salt waves of sorrow. In dismay
I saw by the red lightning's lurid glare
That on the rockbound island of despair
I had been cast. Till the dim dawn of day
I heard my castles falling, and the roll

REGRET

107

Of angry billows bearing to the sea
The broken timbers of my very soul.
Were all the pent-up waters from the whole
Stupendous solar system to break free,
There are no floods now that can frighten me.

REGRET

THERE is a haunting phantom called Regret.
A shadowy creature robed somewhat like woe,
But fairer in the face, whom all men know
By her sad mien, and eyes for ever wet.
No heart would seek her; but once having met
All take her by the hand, and to and fro
They wander through those paths of long ago—
Those hallowed ways 'twere wiser to forget.

One day she led me to that lost land's gate
And bade me enter but I answered 'No!
I will pass on with my bold comrade Fate;
I have no tears to waste on thee—no time—
My strength I hoard for heights I hope to climb;
No friend art thou, for souls that would be great.'

A FABLE

SOME cawing Crows, a hooting Owl,
A Hawk, a canary, an old Marsh-Fowl,
One day all met together,
To hold a caucus, and settle the fate
Of a certain bird (without a mate),
A bird of another feather.

'My friends,' said the Owl, with a look most wise,
'The Eagle is soaring too near the skies,
In a way that is quite improper;
Yet the world is praising her, so I'm told,
And I think her actions have grown so bold
That some of us ought to stop her.'

'I have heard it said,' quoth the Hawk, with a sigh,
'That young lambs died at the glance of her eye,
And I wholly scorn and despise her.
This, and more, I am told they say—
And I think that the only proper way
Is never to recognize her.'

'I am quite convinced,' said Crow with, a caw,
'That the Eagle minds no moral law,
She's a most unruly creature.'
'She's an ugly thing,' piped Canary Bird;
'Some call her handsome—its so absurd—
She hasn't a decent feature.'

Then the old Marsh-Hen went hopping about,
She said she was sure—she hadn't a doubt—
Of the truth of each bird's story:
And she thought it a duty to stop her flight,
To pull her down from her lofty height,
And take the gilt from her glory.

But, lo! from a peak on the mountain grand
That looks out over the smiling land
And over the mighty ocean,
The Eagle is spreading her splendid wings—
She rises, rises, and upwards swings,
With a slow, majestic motion.

Up in the blue of God's own skies,
With a cry of rapture, away she flies,
Close to the Great Eternal:
She sweeps the world with her piercing sight—
Her soul is filled with the infinite
And the joy of things supernal.

Thus rise for ever the chosen of God,
The genius-crowned or the power-shod,
Over the dust-world sailing;
And back, like splinters blown by the winds,
Must fall the missiles of silly minds,
Useless and unavailing.

POEMS OF PLEASURE

PASSIONAL

WOMAN AND WAR

WE women teach our little sons how wrong
And how ignoble blows are; school and
church
Support our precepts and inoculate
The growing minds with thoughts of love and peace.
'Let dogs delight to bark and bite,' we say;
But human beings with immortal souls
Must rise above the methods of the brute
And walk with reason and with self-control.

And then—dear God! you men, you wise, strong men,
Our self-announced superiors in brain,
Our peers in judgment, you go forth to war
You leap at one another, mutilate
And starve and kill your fellow-men, and ask
The world's applause for such heroic deeds.
You boast and strut; and if no song is sung,
No laudatory epic writ in blood,
Telling how many widows you have made,
Why then, perforce, you say our bards are dead
And inspiration sleeps to wake no more.

And we, the women, we whose lives you are—
What can we do but sit in silent homes
And wait and suffer? Not for us the blare
Of trumpets and the bugle's call to arms—
For us no waving banners, no supreme,
Triumphant hour of conquest. Ours the slow
Dread torture of uncertainty, each day
The bootless battle with the same despair.
And when at best your victories reach our ears,
There reaches with them to our pitying hearts
The thought of countless homes made desolate
And other women weeping for their dead.

O men, wise men, superior beings, say,
Is there no substitute for war in this
Great age and era? If you answer 'No,'
Then let us rear our children to be wolves
And teach them from the cradle how to kill.
Why should we women waste our time and work
In talking peace, when men declare for war?

POVERTY AND WEALTH

THE stork flew over a town one day,
And back of each wing an infant lay;
One to a rich man's home he brought,
And one he left at a labourer's cot.
The rich man said, 'My son shall be
A lordly ruler o'er land and sea.'

The labourer sighed, ' 'Tis the good God's will
That I have another mouth to fill.'
The rich man's son grew strong and fair,
And proud with the pride of a millionaire:
His motto in life was, 'Live while you may,'
And he crowded years in a single day.
He bought position and name and place,
And he bought him a wife with a handsome face.
He journeyed over the whole wide world,
But discontent in his heart lay curled
Like a serpent hidden in leaves and moss,
And life seemed hollow and gold was dross.
He scoffed at woman, and doubted God,
And died like a beast and went back to the sod.
The son of the labourer tilled the soil,
And thanked God daily for health and toil.
He wedded for love in his youthful prime,
And two lives chorded in tune and time.
His wants were simple, and simple his creed,
To trust God fully: it served his need,
And lightened his labour, and helped him to die
With a smile on his lips and a hope in his eye.
When all is over and all is done,
Now which of these men was the richer one?

FREEDOM

I CARE not who were vicious back of me,
No shadow of their sins on me is shed.
My will is greater than heredity,
I am no worm to feed upon the dead.

My face, my form, my gestures and my voice,
May be reflections from a race that was.
But this I know, and knowing it, rejoice,
I am myself a part of the Great Cause.

I am a spirit ! Spirit would suffice,
If rightly used, to set a chained world free.
Am I not stronger than a mortal vice
That crawls the length of some ancestral tree ?

SETTLE THE QUESTION RIGHT

HOWEVER the battle is ended,
Though proudly the victor comes,
With flaunting flags and neighing nags
And echoing roll of drums ;
Still truth proclaims this motto
In letters of living light,
No question is ever settled
Until it is settled right.

SETTLE THE QUESTION RIGHT 117

Though the heel of the strong oppressor
May grind the weak in the dust,
And the voices of 'ame with one acclaim
May call him great and just ;
Let those who applaud take warning
And keep this motto in sight,
No question is ever settled
Until it is settled right.

Let those who have failed take courage,
Though the enemy seem to have won ;
If he be in the wrong, though his ranks are
strong,

The battle is not yet done.
For sure as the morning follows
The darkest hour of the night,
No question is ever settled
Until it is settled right.

O men, bowed down with labour,
O women, young yet old,
O heart, oppressed in the toiler's breast
And crushed by the power of gold,
Keep on with your weary battle
Against triumphant might ;
No question is ever settled
Until it is settled right.

TRUE CHARITY

I GAVE a beggar from my little store
Of well-earned gold. He spent the shining ore
And came again, and yet again, still cold
And hungry, as before.

I gave a thought, and through that thought of mine
He found himself, the man, supreme, divine!
Fed, clothed, and crowned with blessings manifold
And now he begs no more.

UNTO THE END

I KNOW not where to-morrow's paths may wend,
Nor what the future holds ; but this I know,
Whichever way my feet are forced to go,
I shall be given courage to the end.

Though God that awful gift of His may send
We call long life, where headstones in a row
Hide all of happiness, yet be it so :
I shall be given courage to the end.

If dark the deepening shadows be, that blend
With life's pale sunlight when the sun dips low,
Though joy speeds by and sorrow's steps are slow,
I shall be given courage to the end.

'THIS TOO SHALL PASS AWAY' 119

I do not question what the years portend—
Or good or ill whatever wind may blow,
It is enough, enough for me to know
I shall be given courage to the end.

'THIS TOO SHALL PASS AWAY'

A MIGHTY monarch in the days of old
Made offer of high honour, wealth and gold,

To one who should produce in form concise
A motto for his guidance, terse yet wise—

A precept, soothing in his hours forlorn,
Yet one that in his prosperous days would warn.

Many the maxims sent the king, men say.
The one he chose : '*This too shall pass away.*'

O jewel sentence from the mine of truth !
What riches it contains for age or youth.

No stately epic, measured and sublime,
So comforts, or so counsels, for all time

As these few words. Go write them on your heart
And make them of your daily life a part.

Has some misfortune fallen to your lot ?
This too will pass away—absorb the thought,

120 'THIS TOO SHALL PASS AWAY'

And wait ; your waiting will not be in vain.
Time gilds with gold the iron links of pain.

The dark to-day leads into light to-morrow
There is no endless joy, no endless sorrow.

Are you upon earth's heights? No cloud in view?
Go read your motto once again : *This too*

Shall pass away ; fame, glory, place, and power,
They are but little haubles of the hour

Flung by the ruthless years down in the dust
Take warning and be worthy of God's trust

Use well your prowess while it lasts ; leave bloom,
Not blight, to mark your footprints to the tomb

The truest greatness lies in being kind,
The truest wisdom in a happy mind

He who desponds, his Maker's judgment mocks ;
The gloomy Christian is a paradox.

Only the sunny soul respects its God,
Since life is short we need to make it broad ;

Since life is brief we need to make it bright.
Then keep the old king's motto well in sight,

And let its meaning permeate each day.
Whatever comes, *This too shall pass away.*

WAR SONNETS

111

WAR SONNETS

I

WAR is destructive, wasteful, brutal, yet
The energies of man are brought to play.
And hidden valour by occasion met
Leaps to the light, as precious jewels may
When earthquakes rend the rock The stress and
strain

Of war stirs men to do their worst and best.
Heroes are forged on anvils hot with pain,
And splendid courage comes but with the test.
Some natures ripen and some virtues bloom
Only in blood-red soil : some souls prove great
Only in moments dark with death or doom.
This is the sad historic jest which fate
Flings to the world, recurring time on time--
Many must fall that one may seem sublime.

II

Above the chaos of impending ill,
Through all thy clamour of insistent strife,
Now while the noise of arming nations fills
Each throbbing hour with menaces to life,
I hear the voice of Progress ! Strange indeed
The shadowed pathways that lead up to light.
But as a runner sometimes will recede
That he may so accumulate his might,

Then with a will that needs must be obeyed
Rushes resistless to the goal with ease,
So the whole world seems now to retrograde,
Slips back to war, that it may speed to peace ;
And in that backward step it gathers force
For the triumphant finish of its course.

SPEECH

TALK happiness. The world is sad enough
Without your woe. No path is wholly rough.
Look for the places that are smooth and clear,
And speak of them to rest the weary ear
Of earth ; so hurt by one continuous strain
Of mortal discontent and grief and pain.

Talk faith. The world is better off without
Your uttered ignorance and morbid doubt.
If you have faith in God, or man, or self,
Say so ; if not, push back upon the shelf
Of silence all your thoughts till faith shall come.
No one will grieve because your lips are dumb.

Talk health. The dreary, never-ending tale
Of mortal maladies is worn and stale ;
You cannot charm or interest or please
By harping on that minor chord disease.
Say you are well, or all is well with you,
And God shall hear your words and make them true

RECRIMINATION

I

S AID Life to Death, 'Methinks if I were you
I would not carry such an awesome face
To terrify the helpless human race.
And if, indeed, those wondrous tales be true
Of happiness beyond, and if I knew
About the boasted blessings of that place,
I would not hide so miserly all trace
Of my vast knowledge, Death, if I were you.
But like a glorious angel I would lean
Above the pathway of each sorrowing soul,
Hope in my eyes, and comfort in my breath,
And strong conviction in my radiant mien,
The while I whispered of that beauteous goal.
This would I do, if I were you, O Death!

II

Said Death to Life, 'If I were you, my friend,
I would not lure confiding souls each day
With fair false smiles, to enter on a way
So filled with pain and trouble to the end.
I would not tempt those whom I should defend,
Nor stand unmoved and see them go astray.
Nor would I force unwilling souls to stay
Who longed for freedom, were I you, my friend.

But like a tender mother I would take
The weary world upon my sheltering breast
And wipe away its tears, and soothe its strife.
I would fulfil my promises, and make
My children bless me as they sank to rest
Where now they curse—if I were you, O Life!

III

Life made no answer; and Death spoke again;
'I would not woo from God's sweet nothingness
A soul to being, if I could not bless
And crown it with all joy. If unto men
My face seems awesome, tell me, Life, why then
Do they pursue me, mad for my caress,
Believing in my silence lies redress
For your loud falsehoods? (So Death spoke again.)
Oh, it is well for you I am not fair,
Well that I hide behind a voiceless tomb
The mighty secrets of that other place.
Else would you stand in impotent despair
While unfledged souls straight from the mother's
womb
Rushed to my arms, and spat upon your face.'

THE CHAIN

MEN have outgrown the worthless creed
Which bade them deem it God's good will
That labour sweat and starve, to fill
And glut the purse of idle greed.

They have outgrown the poor content
That breeds oppression. Forged by pain,
Mind links to mind in one great chain
Of protest and of argument.

And by the hand of progress hurled,
This mighty chain of human thought,
In silence and in anguish wrought,
Encompasses the pulsing world.

And he who will not form a link
Of new conditions, soon to be,
Ere long must stand aghast, and see
Old systems toppling down the brink.

They cannot, and they shall not last.
The broader impulse of the day
Will gain and grow and sweep away
The rank injustice of the Past.

Let no man think he can despoil
And rob his kind by trick and fraud,
And at the last make peace with God
By tossing alms to honest toil.

THE CHAIN

The purport of the hour is vast
 The world wants justice. It demands
 United hearts, united hands—
 The day of charity is past.

More labour for the selfish few,
 More leisure for the burdened mass;
 These things shall surely come to pass
 As old conditions change to new.

They change through strain, and strike, and
 strife;

The worst but speeds the final best.
 Work for all men—for all men rest,
 And time to taste the joys of life.

THE PROTEST

SAID the great machine of iron and wood,
 'Lo, I am a creature meant for good.
 But the criminal clutch of Godless greed
 Has made me a monster that scatters need
 And want and hunger wherever I go.
 I would lift men's burdens and lighten their woe,
 I would give them leisure to laugh in the sun,
 If owned by the Many—instead of the one.

'If owned by the people, the whole wide earth
 Should learn my purpose and know my worth.
 I would close the chasm that yawns in our soil
 'Twixt unearned riches and ill-paid toil.

THE PROTEST

127

No man should hunger, and no man labour
To fill the purse of an idle neighbour ;
And each man should know when his work was
done,
Were I shared by the Many—not owned by one.

' I am forced by the few with their greed for gain,
To forge for the many new fetters of pain.
Yet this is my purpose, and ever will be
To set the slaves of the workshop free.
God hasten the day when, overjoyed,
That desperate host of the unemployed
Shall hear my message and understand,
And hail me friend in an opulent land.'

SUCCESS

NO mortal yet has measured his full force.
It is a river rising in God's thought
And emptying in the soul of man. Go back
Back to the Source, and find divinity.
Forget the narrow borders, and ignore
The rocks and chasms which obstruct the way.
Remember the beginning. Man may be
And do the thing he wishes if he keeps
That one thought dominant through night and day
And knows his strength is limitless because

MY LAUNCH AND I

Its Fountainhead is God. That mighty stream
Shall bear upon its breast, like golden fleets,
His hopes, his efforts and his purposes,
To anchor in the harbour of Success.

MY LAUNCH AND I

WHAT glorious times we have had together,
My launch and I, in the summer weather !
My trim little launch, with its sturdy sides
And its strong heart beating away as it glides
Out of the harbour and out of the bay,
Wherever our fancy may lead away,
Rollicking over the salt sea track,
Hurrying seaward and hurrying back

My boat has never a braggart sail,
To boast in the breeze, in the calm to quail.
No tyrant boom deals a sudden blow,
Saying, ' You are my lackey, bend low, bend low !'
No mast struts over a windless sea
To show how powerless pride may be ;
But sure and steady, and true and staunch,
It bounds o'er the billows—my little launch

Ready and willing and quick to feel
The slightest touch of my hand on the wheel,
It laughs in the teeth of a driving gale,
Or skims by the Cat boat's drooping sail.

MY LAUNCH AND I

129

Its head held high when the Sound is still,
Then dipping its prow like a water-bird's bill
Down under the waves of a rolling sea—
Oh, my gay little launch is the boat for me!

Ofttimes when the great Sound seethes and swirls
I carry a cargo of laughing girls.
Bare-armed, bare-limbed, and with hanging hair
They are bold as mermaids and twice as fair.
They swarm from the cabin—they perch on the
prow;

When the tenth wave batters them, breast and brow,
They bloom the brighter as sea-flowers do,
While their shrill sweet merriment bursts anew.

And oft when the sunset dyes the bay,
O'er a mirror-like surface we glide away,
My launch and I, to follow the breeze
That has jilted the shore for the deeper seas.
When the full moon flirts with the perigee tide,
On a track of silver away we ride—
Oh, glorious times we have together,
My boat and I, in the summer weather.

DEATH OF LABOUR

METHOUGHT a great wind swept across the
earth,

And all the toilers perished. Then I saw
Pale terror blanch the rosy face of mirth,
And careless eyes grow full of fear and awe.
The sounds of pleasure ceased; the laughing song
On folly's lip changed to an angry curse:
A nameless horror seized the idle throng,
And death and ruin filled the universe.

PROGRESS

IN its giving and its getting,
In its smiling and its fretting,
In its peaceful years of toiling
And its awful days of war,
Ever on the world is moving,
And all human life is proving
It is reaching toward the purpose
That the great God meant it for.

Through its laughing and its weeping,
Through its losing and its keeping,
Through its follies and its labours,
Weaving in and out of sight

PROGRESS

131

To the end from the beginning,
Through all virtue and all sinning,
Reeled from God's great spool of Progress,
Runs the golden thread of Right.

All the darkness and the errors,
All the sorrows and the terrors,
Time has painted in the background
On the canvas of the World.
All the beauty of life's story
He will do in tones of glory
When these final blots of shadow
From his brushes have been hurled.

DISCONTENT

THE splendid discontent of God
With chaos, made the world,
Set suns in place, and filled all space
With stars that shone and whirled.

If apes had been content with tails,
No thing of higher shape
Had come to birth : the king of earth
To-day would be an ape.

And from the discontent of man
The world's best progress springs.
Then feed the flame—(from God it came)—
Until you mount on wings.

SURRENDER

LOVE, when we met, 'twas like two planets meeting.
Strange chaos followed; body, soul, and heart
Seemed shaken, thrilled and startled by that greeting.
Old ties, old dreams, old aims, all torn apart
And wrenched away, left nothing there the while
But the great shining glory of your smile.

I knew no past; 'twas all a blurred, bleak waste:
I asked no future; 'twas a blinding glare.
I only saw the present: as men taste
Some stimulating wine, and lose all care,
I tasted Love's elixir, and I seemed
Dwelling in some strange land, like one who dreamed.

It was a Godlike separate existence;
Our world was set apart in some fair clime,
I had no will, no purpose, no resistance;
I only knew I loved you for all time.
The earth seemed something foreign and afar,
And we two, sovereigns dwelling in a star!

It is so sad, so strange, I almost doubt
That all those years could be before we met.
Do you not wish that we could blot them out?
Obliterate them wholly, and forget
That we had any part in life until
We clasped each other with Love's rapture thrill?

SURRENDER

133

My being trembled to its very centre
At that first kiss. Cold reason stood aside
With folded arms to let a grand Love enter
In my Soul's secret chamber to abide.
Its great High Priest, my first love and my last,
There on its altar I consumed my past.

And all my life I lay upon its shrine
The best emotions of my heart and brain,
Whatever gifts and graces may be mine;
No secret thought, no memory I retain,
But give them all for dear Love's precious sake;
Complete surrender of the whole I make.

THE BIRTH OF THE OPAL

THE Sunbeam loved the Moonbeam,
And followed her low and high,
But the Moonbeam fled and hid her head,
She was so shy—so shy.

The Sunbeam wooed with passion;
Ah, he was a lover bold!
And his heart was afire with mad desire
For the Moonbeam pale and cold.

She fled like a dream before him,
Her hair was a shining sheen,
And oh, that Fate would annihilate
The space that lay between!

THE BIRTH OF THE OPAL

Just as the day lay panting
In the arms of the twilight dim,
The Sunbeam caught the one he sought
And drew her close to him.

But out of his warm arms, startled
And stirred by Love's first shock,
She sprang afraid, like a trembling maid,
And hid in the niche of a rock.

And the Sunbeam followed and found her
And led her to Love's own feast ;
And they were wed on that rocky bed,
And the dying Day was their priest.

And lo ! the beautiful Opal—
That rare and wondrous gem—
Where the moon and sun blend into one,
Is the child that was born to them.

THE DIFFERENCE

PASSION is what the sun feels for the earth
When harvests ripen into golden birth.

Lust is the hot simoon whose burning breath
Sweeps o'er the fields with devastating death.

Passion is what God felt, the Holy One,
Who loved the world so, He begot His Son.

TWO LOVES

135

Lust is the impulse Satan peering in
To Eden had, when he taught Eve to sin.

One sprang from light, and one from darkness grew ;
How dim the vision that confounds the two !

TWO LOVES

THE woman he loved, while he dreamed of her,
Danced on till the stars grew dim,
But alone with her heart, from the world apart,
Sat the woman who loved him.

The woman he worshipped only smiled
When he poured out his passionate love.
But the other somewhere, kissed her treasure most rare,
A book he had touched with his glove.

The woman he loved betrayed his trust,
And he wore the scars for life ;
And he cared not, nor knew, that the other was true ;
But no man called her his wife.

The woman he loved trod festal halls,
While they sang his funeral hymn,
But the sad bells tolled, ere the year was old,
For the woman who loved him.

THE WAY OF IT

THIS is the way of it, wide world over,
One is beloved, and one is the lover,
One gives and the other receives.
One lavishes all in a wild emotion,
One offers a smile for a life's devotion,
One hopes and the other believes,
One lies awake in the night to weep,
And the other drifts off in a sweet sound sleep.

One soul is aflame with a godlike passion,
One plays with love in an idler's fashion,
One speaks and the other hears.
One sobs, 'I love you,' and wet eyes show it,
And one laughs lightly, and says, 'I know it,'
With smiles for the other's tears.
One lives for the other and nothing beside,
And the other remembers the world is wide.

This is the way of it, sad earth over,
The heart that breaks is the heart of the lover,
And the other learns to forget.
'For what is the use of endless sorrow ?
Though the sun goes down, it will rise to-morrow ;
And life is not over yet.'
Oh ! I know this truth, if I know no other
That passionate Love is Pain's own mother.

ANGEL OR DEMON

YOU call me an angel of love and of light,
A being of goodness and heavenly fire,
Sent out from God's kingdom to guide you aright,
In paths where your spirits may mount and aspire.
You say that I glow like a star on its course,
Like a ray from the altar, a spark from the source.
Now list to my answer ; let all the world hear it ;
I speak unafraid what I know to be true :
A pure, faithful love is the creative spirit
Which makes women angels ! I live but in you.
We are bound soul to soul by life's holiest laws ;
If I am an angel—why, you are the cause.
As my ship skims the sea, I look up from the deck.
Fair, firm at the wheel shines Love's beautiful form,
And shall I curse the barque that last night went to
wreck,
By the Pilot abandoned to darkness and storm ?
My craft is no stauncher, she too had been lost—
Had the wheelman deserted, or slept at his post.
I laid down the wealth of my soul at your feet
(Some woman does this for some man every day).
No desperate creature who walks in the street,
Has a wickeder heart than I might have, I say,
Had you wantonly misused the treasures you won,
—As so many men with heart riches have done.

This fire from God's altar, this holy love flame,
That burns like sweet incense for ever for you,
Might now be a wild conflagration of shame
Had you tortured my heart, or been base or untrue,
For angels and devils are cast in one mould,
Till love guides them upward, or downward, I hold

I tell you the women who make fervent wives
And sweet tender mothers, had Fate been less fair,
Are the women who might have abandoned their lives
To the madness that springs from and ends in despair
As the fire on the hearth which sheds brightness around,
Neglected, may level the walls to the ground.

The world makes grave errors in judging these things,
Great good and great evil are born in one breast.
Love horns us and hoofs us—or gives us our wings,
And the best could be worst, as the worst could be
best.

You must thank your own worth for what I grew to be,
For the demon lurked under the angel in me.

DAWN

DAY'S sweetest moments are at dawn.
Refreshed by his long sleep, the Light
Kisses the languid lips of Night,
Ere she can rise and hasten on.

PEACE AND LOVE

139

All glowing from his dreamless rest
He holds her closely to his breast,
Warm lip to lip and limb to limb,
Until she dies for love of him.

PEACE AND LOVE

THERE are two angels, messengers of light,
Both born of God, who yet are bitterest foes,
No human breast their dual presence knows.
As violently opposed as wrong and right,
When one draws near, the other takes swift flight,
And when one enters, thence the other goes.
Till mortal life in the immortal flows,
So must these two avoid each other's sight.
Despair and hope may meet within one heart,
The vulture may be comrade to the dove!
Pleasure and Pain swear friendship leal and true:
But till the grave unites them, still apart
Must dwell these angels known as Peace and Love,
For only Death can reconcile the two.

THE INSTRUCTOR

NOT till we meet with Love in all his beauty,
In all his solemn majesty and worth,
Can we translate the meaning of life's duty,
Which God oft writes in cypher at our birth.

THE INSTRUCTOR

Not till Love comes in all his strength and terror
Can we read other's hearts ; not till then know
A wide compassion for all human error,
Or sound the quivering depths of mortal woe.

Not till we sail with him o'er stormy oceans
Have we seen tempests ; hidden in his hand
He holds the keys to all the great emotions ;
Till he unlocks them, none can understand.

Not till we walk with him on lofty mountains
Can we quite measure heights. And, O sad truth !
When once we drink from his immortal fountains,
We bid farewell to the light heart of youth.

Thereafter our most perfect day will borrow
A dimming shadow from some dreaded night.
So great grows joy it merges into sorrow,
And evermore pain tinctures our delight.

BLASÉ

THE world has outlived all its passion :
Its men are inane and blasé,
Its women mere puppets of fashion ;
Life now is a comedy play.
Our Abélard sighs for a season,
Then yields with decorum to fate.
Our Héloïse listens to reason,
And seeks a new mate.

Our Romeo's flippant emotion
Grows pale as the summer grows old ;
Our Juliet proves her devotion
By clasping—a cup filled with gold.
Vain Antony boasts of his favours
From fair Cleopatra the frail,
And the death of the sorceress savours
Less of asps than of ale.

With the march of bold civilisation
Great loves and great faiths are down-trod,
They belonged to an era and nation
All fresh with the imprint of God.
High culture emasculates feeling,
The over-taught brain robs the heart,
And the shrine now where mortals are kneeling
Is a commonplace mart.

Our effeminate athers and brothers
Keep carefully out of life's storm,
From the ladylike minds of our mothers
We are taught that to feel is 'bad form.'
Our worshippers now and our lovers
Are calmly devout with their brains,
And we laugh at the man who discovers
Warm blood in his veins

But you, O twin souls, passion-mated,
 Who love as the gods loved of old,
 What blundering destiny fated
 Your lives to be cast in this mould?
 Like a lurid volcanic upheaval,
 In pastures prosaic and grey,
 You seem with your fervours primal,
 Among us to-day.

You dropped from some planet of splendour,
 Perhaps as it circled afar,
 And your constancy, swerveless and tender,
 You learned from the course of that star.
 Fly back to its bosom, I warn you—
 As back to the ark flew the dove—
 The minions of earth will but scorn you,
 Because you can love.

THE SEA-BREEZE AND THE SCARF

HUNG on the casement that looked o'er the main,
 Fluttered a scarf of blue;
 And a gay, bold breeze paused to flatter and tease
 This trifle of delicate hue.
 'You are lovelier far than the proud skies are,'
 He said, with a voice that sighed;
 'You are fairer to me than the beautiful sea,
 Oh, why do you stay here and hide?'

THE SEA-BREEZE AND THE SCARF 143

'You are wasting your life in that dull, dark room
(And he fondled her silken folds);
O'er the casement lean but a little, my Queen,
And see what the great world holds.
How the wonderful blue of your matchless hue
Cheapens both sea and sky—
You are far too bright to be hidden from sight.
Come, fly with me, darling—fly.'

Tender his whisper and sweet his caress,
Flattered and pleased was she,
The arms of her lover lifted her over
The casement out to sea.
Close to his breast she was fondly pressed,
Kissed once by his laughing mouth;
Then dropped to her grave in the cruel wave,
While the wind went whistling south.

THREE AND ONE

SOMETIMES she seems so helpless and so mild,
So full of sweet unreason and so weak,
So prone to some capricious whim or freak;
Now gay, now tearful, and now anger-wild,
By her strange moods of waywardness beguiled
And entertained, I stroke her pretty cheek,
And soothing words of peace and comfort speak;
And love her as a father loves a child.

Sometimes when I am troubled and sore pressed
On every side by fast advancing care,
She rises up with such majestic air,
I deem her some Olympian goddess-guest,
Who brings my heart new courage, hope, and rest:
In her brave eyes dwells balm for my despair,
And then I seem, while fondly gazing there,
A loving child upon my mother's breast.

Again, when her warm veins are full of life,
And youth's volcanic tidal wave of fire
Sends the swift mercury of her pulses higher,
Her beauty stirs my heart to maddening strife,
And all the tiger in my blood is rife;
I love her with a lover's fierce desire,
And find in her my dream, complete, entire,
Child, Mother, Mistress—all in one word—Wife.

INBORN

AS long as men have eyes wherewith to gaze,
As long as men have eyes,
The sight of beauty to their sense shall be
As mighty winds are to a sleeping sea
When stormy billows rise.
And beauty's smile shall stir youth's ardent blood
As rays of sunlight burst the swelling bud;
As long as men have eyes wherewith to gaze.

As long as men have words wherewith to praise,
 As long as men have words,
 They shall describe the softly-moulded breast,
 Where Love and Pleasure make their downy nest,
 Like little singing-birds ;
 And lovely limbs, and lips of luscious fire,
 Shall be the theme of many a poet's lyre,
 As long as men have words wherewith to praise.

As long as men have hearts that long for homes,
 As long as men have hearts,
 Hid often like the acorn in the earth,
 Their inborn love of noble woman's worth,
 Beyond all beauty's arts,
 Shall stem the sensuous current of desire,
 And urge the world's best thought to something
 higher,
 As long as men have hearts that long for homes.

TWO PRAYERS

HIS

DEAR, when you lift your gentle heart in prayer
 Ask God to send His angel Death to me
 Long ere he comes to you, if that may be.
 I would dwell with you in that new life there,

But having, man-like, sinned, I must prepare,
By sad probation, ere I hope to see
Those upper realms which are at once thrown free
To sweet, white souls like yours, unstained and fair,
Time is so brief on earth, I well might spare
A few short years, if so I could atone
For my marred past, ere you are called above.
My soul would glory in its own despair,
Till purified I met you at God's throne,
And entered on Eternities of Love.



Nay Love, not so I frame my prayer to God;
I want you close beside me to the end;
If it could be then, I would have Him send
A simultaneous death, and let one sod
Cover our two hushed hearts. If you have trod
Paths strange to me on earth, oh, let me wend
My way with yours hereafter: let me blend
My tears with yours beneath the chastening rod.
If you must pay the penalty for sin,
In vales of darkness, ere you pass on higher,
I will petition God to let me go.
I would not wait on earth, nor enter in
To any joys before you. I desire
No glory greater than to share your woe.

SLEEP AND DEATH

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SLEEP AND DEATH

WHEN Sleep drops down beside my Love and me
Although she wears the countenance of a friend,
A jealous foe we prove her in the end.
In separate barques far out on dreamland's sea,
She lures our wedded souls. Wild winds blow free,
And drift us wide apart by tides that tend
Tow'rd unknown worlds. Not once our strange ways
blend
Through the long night, while Sleep looks on in glee.

O Death! be kinder than thy sister seems,
When at thy call we journey forth some day,
Through that mysterious and untraced strait,
To lands more distant than the land of dreams;
Close, close together let our spirits stay,
Or else, with one swift stroke annihilate!

ABSENCE

AFTER you went away, our lovely room
Seemed like a casket whence the soul had fled.
I stood in awful and appalling gloom,
The world was empty and all joy seemed dead

ABSENCE

I think I felt as one might feel who knew
That Death had left him on the earth alone.
For 'all the world' to my fond heart means you ;
And there is nothing left when you are gone.

Each way I turned my sad, tear-blinded gaze,
I found fresh torture to augment my grief ;
Some new reminder of the perfect days
We passed together, beautiful as brief.

There lay a pleasing book that we had read—
And there your latest gift ; and everywhere
Some tender act, some loving word you said,
Seemed to take form and mock at my despair.

All happiness that human heart may know
I find with you ; and when you go away,
Those hours become a winding-sheet of woe,
And make a ghastly phantom of To-day.

LOVE MUCH

LOVE much. Earth has enough of bitter in it.
Cast sweets into its cup whene'er you can.
No heart so hard, but love at last may win it.
Love is the grand primæval cause of man.
All hate is foreign to the first great plan.

LOVE MUCH

149

Love much. Your heart will be led out to slaughter,
On altars built of envy and deceit.
Love on, Love on ! 'tis bread upon the water ;
It shall be cast in loaves yet at your feet,
Unleavened manna, most divinely sweet.

Love much. Your faith will be dethroned and shaken,
Your trust betrayed by many a fair, false lure.
Remount your faith, and let new trusts awaken
Though clouds obscure them, yet the stars are pure,
Love is a vital force and must endure.

Love much. Men's souls contract with cold suspicion ;
Shine on them with warm love, and they expand.
'Tis love, not creeds, that from a low condition
Leads mankind up to heights supreme and grand.
Oh that the world could see and understand !

Love much. There is no waste in freely giving ;
More blessed is it, even, than to receive.
He who loves much alone finds life worth living :
Love on, through doubt and darkness ; and believe
There is no thing which Love may not achieve.

ONE OF US TWO

THE day will dawn when one of us shall hearken
In vain to hear a voice that has grown dumb,
And morns will fade, noons pale, and shadows darken,
While sad eyes watch for feet that never come.

One of us two must sometimes face existence
 All with memories that but sharpen pain.
 And these sweet days shall shine back in the distance,
 Like dreams of summer dawns, in nights of rain.
 One of us two, with tortured heart half broken,
 Shall read long-treasured letters through salt tears,
 Shall kiss with anguished lips each cherished token,
 That speaks of these love-crowned delicious years.
 One of us two shall find all light, all beauty,
 All joy on earth, a tale for ever done ;
 Shall know henceforth that life means only duty.
 O God ! O God ! have pity on that one.

HER REVERIE

WE were both of us—ay, we were both of us
 there,
 In the self-same house at the play together ;
 To her it was summer, with bees in the air—
 To me it was winter weather.
 We never had met, and yet we two
 Had played in desperate woman fashion,
 A game of life, with a prize in view,
 And oh ! I played with passion.
 'Twas a game that meant heaven and sweet home-life
 For the one who went forth with a crown upon her ;
 For the one who lost—it meant lone strife,
 Sorrow, despair, and dishonour.

HER REVERIE

151

Well, she won (yet it was not she—
I am told that she was a praying woman :
No earthly power could outwit me—
But hers was superhuman)

She has the prize, and I have—well,
Memories sweeter than joys of heaven ;
Memories fierce as the fires of hell—
Those unto me were given.

And we sat in the self-same house last night :
And he was there. It is no error
When I say (and it gave me keen delight)
That his eye met mine with terror.

When the love we have won at any cost
Has grown familiar as some old story,
Nought seems so dear as the love we lost,
All bright with the Past's weird glory.

And though he is fond of that woman, I know—
I saw in his eyes the brief confession—
That the love seemed sweeter which he let go
Than that in his possession.

So I am content. It would be the same
Were I the wife love-crowned and petted,
And she the woman who lost the game—
Then she were the one regretted.

TWO SINNERS

And loving him so, I would rather be
 The one he let go—and then vaguely desired,
 Than, winning him, once in his face to see
 The look of a love grown tired.

TWO SINNERS

THERE was a man, it was said one time,
 Who went astray in his youthful prime.
 Can the brain keep cool and the heart keep quiet
 When the blood is a river that's running riot?
 And boys will be boys the old folks say,
 And the man is the better who's had his day.

The sinner reformed; and the preacher told
 Of the prodigal son who came back to the fold.
 And Christian people threw open the door,
 With a warmer welcome than ever before.
 Wealth and honour were his to command,
 And a spotless woman gave him her hand.

And the world strewed their pathway with blossoms
 aboom, |

Crying 'God bless ladye, and God bless groom!'

There was a maiden who went astray
 In the golden dawn of her life's young day.
 She had more passion and heart than head
 And she followed blindly where fond Love led.

WHAT LOVE IS

153

And Love unchecked is a dangerous guide
To wander at will by a fair girl's side.

The woman repented and turned from sin,
But no door opened to let her in.

The preacher prayed that she might be forgiven,
But told her to look for mercy—in Heaven.

For this is the law of the earth, we know :
That the woman is stoned, while the man may go.

A brave man wedded her after all,
But the world said frowning, ' We shall not call.'

WHAT LOVE IS

LOVE is the centre and circumference ;
The cause and aim of all things—'tis the key
To joy and sorrow, and the recompense
For all the ills that have been or may be.

Love is as bitter as the dregs of sin,
As sweet as clover-honey in its cell ;
Love is the password whereby souls get in
To heaven—the gate that leads, sometimes, to hell.

Love is the crown that glorifies ; the curse
That brands and burdens ; it is life and death ;
It is the great law of the universe ;
And nothing can exist without its breath

CONSTANCY

Love is the impulse which directs the world,
 And all things know it and obey its power.
 Man, in the maelstrom of his passions whirled ;
 The bee that takes the pollen to the flower ;

The earth, uplifting her bare, pulsing breast
 To fervent kisses of the amorous sun ;—
 Each but obeys creative Love's behest,
 Which everywhere instinctively is done.

Love is the only thing that pays for birth,
 Or makes death welcome. O dear God above
 This beautiful but sad, perplexing earth,
 Pity the hearts that know—or know not—Love !

CONSTANCY

I WILL be true. Mad stars forsake their courses,
 And, led by reckless meteors, turn away
 From paths appointed by Eternal Forces ;
 But my fixed heart shall never go astray.
 Like those calm worlds whose sun-directed motion
 Is undisturbed by strife of wind or sea,
 So shall my swerveless and serene devotion
 Sweep on for ever, loyal unto thee.

I will be true. The fickle tide, divided
 Between two wooing shores, in wild unrest
 May to and fro shift always undecided ;
 Not so the tide of Passion in my breast.

CONSTANCY

155

With the grand surge of some resistless river,
That hurries on, past mountain, vale, and sea,
Unto the main, its waters to deliver,
So my full heart keeps all its wealth for thee.

I will be true. Light barques may be belated,
Or turned aside by every breeze at play,
While sturdy ships, well manned and richly freighted,
With fair sails flying, anchor safe in Bay
Like some firm rock, that, steadfast and unshaken,
Stands all unmoved when ebbing billows flee ;
So would my heart stand, faithful if forsaken—
I will be true, though thou art false to me.

PHILOSOPHICAL

RESOLVE

AS the dead year is clasped by a dead December,
So let your dead sins with your dead days lie.
A new life is yours, and a new hope. Remember,
We build our own ladders to climb to the sky.
Stand out in the sunlight of Promise, forgetting
Whatever the Past held of sorrow or wrong.
We waste half our strength in a useless regretting ;
We sit by old tombs in the dark too long.

Have you missed in your aim ? Well, the mark is still
shining.

Did you faint in the race ? Well, take breath for
the next.

Did the clouds drive you back ? But see yonder their
lining.

Were you tempted and fell ? Let it serve for a
text !

As each year hurries by, let it join that procession
Of skeleton shapes that march down to the Past,
While you take your place in the line of Progression,
With your eyes on the heavens, your face to the
blast.

OPTIMISM

157

I tell you the future can hold no terrors
For any sad soul while the stars revolve,
If he will stand firm on the grave of his errors,
And instead of regretting, resolve, resolve.
It is never too late to begin rebuilding,
Though all into ruins your life seems hurled,
'or see how the light of the New Year is gilding
The wan, worn face of the bruised old world.

OPTIMISM

I 'M no reformer ; for I see more light
Than darkness in the world ; mine eyes are quick
To catch the first dim radiance of the dawn,
And slow to note the cloud that threatens storm.
The fragrance and the beauty of the rose
Delight me so, slight thought I give its thorn ;
And the sweet music of the lark's clear song
Stays longer with me than the night-hawk's cry.
And e'en in this great throe of pain called Life
I find a rapture linked with each despair,
Well worth the price of anguish. I detect
More good than evil in humanity.
Love lights more fires than hate extinguishes,
And men grow better as the world grows old.

PAIN'S PROOF

I THINK man's great capacity for pain
Proves his immortal birthright. I am sure
No merely human mind could bear the strain
Of some tremendous sorrows we endure.

Art's most ingenious breastworks fail at length,
Beat by the mighty billows of the sea :
Only the God-formed shores possess the strength
To stand before their onslaughts, and not flee.

The structure that we build with careful toil,
The tempest lays in ruins in an hour ;
While some grand tree that springs forth from the soil
Is bended but not broken by its power.

Unless our souls had root in soil divine
We could not bear earth's overwhelming strife.
The fiercest pain that racks this heart of mine,
Convinces me of everlasting life.

IMMORTALITY

IMMORTAL life is something to be earned
By slow self-conquest, comradeship with Pain,
And patient seeking after higher truths.
We cannot follow our own wayward wills,

And feed our baser appetites, and give
Loose rein to foolish tempers year on year,
And then cry, 'Lord, forgive me, I believe,'
And straightway bathe in glory. Men must learn
God's system is too grand a thing for that.
The spark divine dwells in our souls, and we
Can fan it to a steady flame of light,
Whose lustre gilds the pathway to the tomb,
And shines on through Eternity, or else
Neglect it till it glimmers down to Death,
And leaves us but the darkness of the grave.
Each conquered passion feeds the living flame ;
Each well-borne sorrow is a step towards God ;
Faith cannot rescue, and no blood redeem,
The soul that will not reason and resolve.
Lean on thyself, yet prop thyself with prayer
(All hope is prayer ; who calls it hope no more,
Sends prayer footsore forth over weary wastes,
While he who calls it prayer gives wings to hope),
And there are spirits, messengers of Love,
Who come at call and fortify our strength.
Make friends with them, and with thine inner self ;
Cast out all envy, bitterness, and hate ;
And keep the mind's fair tabernacle pure.
Shake hands with Pain, give greeting unto Grief,
Those angels in disguise, and thy glad soul
From height to height, from star to shining star,
Shall climb and claim blest immortality.

ANSWERED PRAYERS

I PRAYED for riches, and achieved success ;
All that I touched turned into gold. Alas !
My cares were greater and my peace was less
When that wish came to pass.

I prayed for glory, and I heard my name
Sung by sweet children and by hoary men,
But ah ! the hurts—the hurts that come with fame :
I was not happy then.

I prayed for Love, and had my heart's desire.
Through quivering heart and body, and through
brain,
There swept the flame of its devouring fire,
And but the scars remain.

I prayed for a contented mind. At length
Great light upon my darkened spirit burst.
Great peace fell on me also, and great strength—
Oh, had that prayer been first !

THE LADY OF TEARS

THROUGH valley and hamlet and city
Wherever humanity dwells,
With a heart full of infinite pity,
A breast that with sympathy swells,

THE LADY OF TEARS

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She walks in her beauty immortal.
Each household grows sad as she nears
But she crosses at length every portal,
The mystical Lady of Tears.

If never this vision of sorrow
Has shadowed your life in the past,
You will meet her, I know, some to-morrow—
She visits all hearthstones at last.
To hovel, and cottage, and palace,
To servant and king she appears,
And offers the gall of her chalice—
The unwelcome Lady of Tears.

To the eyes that have smiled but in gladness,
To the souls that have basked in the sun,
She seems in her garments of sadness
A creature to dread and to shun.
And lips that have drunk but of pleasure
Grow pallid and tremble with tears,
As she portions the gall from her measure,
The merciless Lady of Tears.

But in midnight, lone hearts that are quaking,
With the agonised numbness of grief,
Are saved from the torture of breaking
By her bitter-sweet draught of relief.

THE MASTER HAND

Oh, then do all graces enfold her ;
Like a goddess she looks and appears,
And the eyes overflow that behold her—
The beautiful Lady of Tears.

Though she turns to lamenting all laughter,
Though she gives us despair for delight,
Life holds a new meaning thereafter,
For those who will greet her aright.
They stretch out their hands to each other,
For sorrow unites and endears
The children of one tender mother,
The sweet, blessed Lady of Tears.

THE MASTER HAND

IT is something too strange to understand,
How all the chords on the instrument,
Whether sorrowful, blithe, or grand,
Under the touch of your master hand
Were in one melody blent.
Major, minor, everything—all—
Came at your magic fingers' call.

Why! famed musicians had turned in despair
Again and again from those self-same keys ;
They mayhap brought forth a simple air,
But a discord always crept in somewhere,
In their fondest efforts to please.

THE MASTER HAND

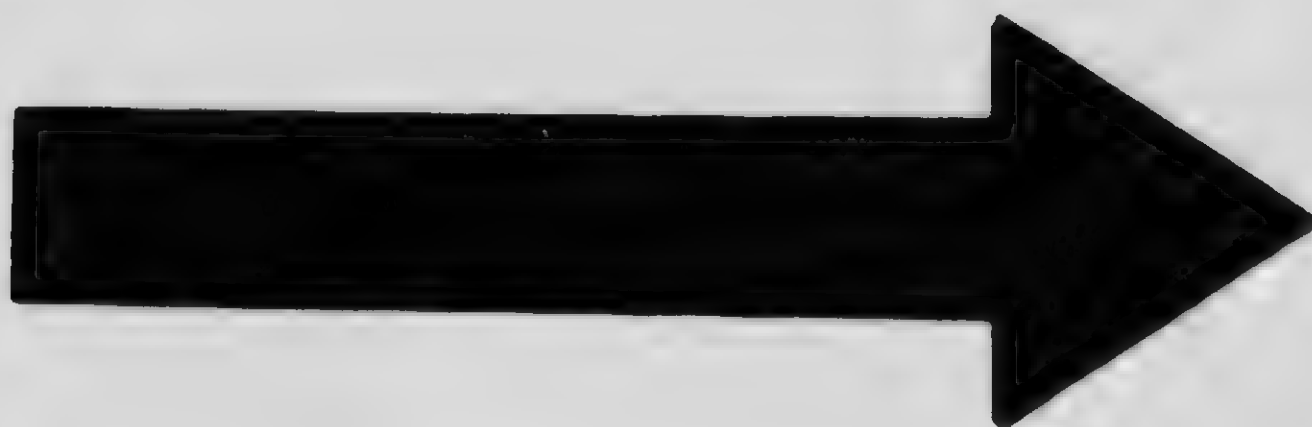
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Or a jarring, jangling, meaningless strain
Angered the silence to noisy pain.

'Out of tune,' they would frown and say;
Or 'a loosened key' or 'a broken string';
But sure and certain they were alway
That no man living on earth could play
Measures more perfect, or bring
Sweeter sounds or a truer air
Out of that curious instrument there.

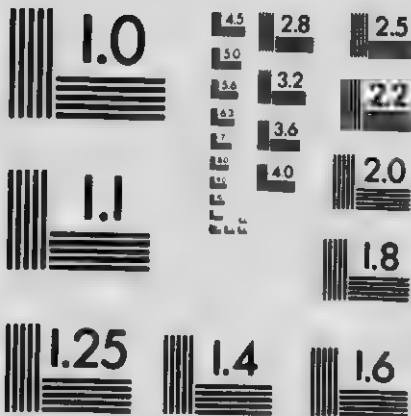
And then you came. You swept the scale
With a mighty master's wonderful art.
You made the minor keys sob and wail,
While the low notes rang like a bell in a gale.
And every chord in my heart,
From the deep bass tones to the shrill ones above,
Joined into that glorious harmony—Love.

And now, though I live for a thousand years,
On no new chord can a new hand fall.
The chords of sorrow, of pain, of tears,
The chords of raptures and hopes and fears,
I say you have struck them all;
And all the meaning put into each strain
By the Great Composer, you have made plain.



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SECRET THOUGHTS

I HOLD it true that thoughts are things
Endowed with bodies, breath, and wings,
And that we send them forth to fill
The world with good results—or ill.

That which we call our secret thought
Speeds to the earth's remotest spot,
And leaves its blessings or its woes
Like tracks behind it as it goes.

It is God's law. Remember it
In your still chamber as you sit
With thoughts you would not dare have known,
And yet make comrades when alone.

These thoughts have life ; and they will fly
And leave their impress by and by
Like some marsh breeze, whose poisoned breath
Breathes into homes its fevered death.

And after you have quite forgot
Or all outgrown some vanished thought,
Back to your mind to make its home,
A dove or raven, it will come.

Then let your secret thoughts be fair ;
They have a vital part and share
In shaping worlds and moulding fate—
God's system is so intricate.

THERE COMES A TIME

THERE comes a time to every mortal being,
 Whate'er his station or his lot in life,
 When his sad soul yearns for the final freeing
 From all this jarring and unceasing strife.

There comes a time, when, having lost its savour,
 The salt of wealth is worthless ; when the mind
 Grows wearied with the world's capricious favour,
 And sighs for something that it cannot find.

There comes a time, when, though kind friends throng
 ing
 About our pathway with sweet acts of grace,
 We feel a vast and overwhelming longing
 For something that we cannot name or place.

There comes a time, when, with earth's best love by us,
 To feed the heart's great hunger and desire,
 We find not even this can satisfy us ;
 The soul within us cries for something higher.

What greater proof need we that we inherit
 A life immortal in another sphere ?
 It is the homesick longing of the spirit
 That cannot find its satisfaction here.

THE WORLD

WITH noiseless steps good goes its way ;
The earth shakes under evil's tread.
We hear the uproar, and 'tis said,
The world grows wicked every day.

It is not true. With quiet feet,
In silence, Virtue sows her seeds ;
While Sin goes shouting out his deeds,
And echoes listen and repeat.

But surely as the old world moves,
And circles round the shining sun,
So surely does God's purpose run,
And all the human race improves.

Despite bold evil's noise and stir,
Truth's golden harvests ripen fast ;
The Present far outshines the Past ;
Men's thoughts are higher than they were.

Who runs may read this truth, I say :
Sin travels in a rumbling car,
While Virtue soars on like a star—
The world grows better every day.

NECESSITY

NECESSITY, whom long I deemed my foe,
Thou cold, unsmiling, and hard-visaged dame,
Now I no longer see thy face, I know
Thou wert my friend beyond reproach or blame.

My best achievements and the fairest flights
Of my winged fancy were inspired by thee ;
Thy stern voice stirred me to the mountain heights ;
Thy importunings bade me do and be.

But for thy breath, the spark of living fire
Within me might have smouldered out at length ;
But for thy lash, which would not let me tire,
I never would have measured my own strength.

But for thine oft-times merciless control
Upon my life, that nerved me past despair,
I never should have dug deep in my soul
And found the mine of treasures hidden there.

And though we walk divided pathways now,
And I no more may see thee, to the end,
I weave this little chaplet for thy brow,
That other hearts may know, and hail thee friend.

ACHIEVEMENT

TRUST in thine own untried capacity
As thou wouldst trust in God Himself. Thy soul
Is but an emanation from the whole.
Thou dost not dream what forces lie in thee,
Vast and unfathomed as the grandest sea ;
Thy silent mind o'er diamond caves may roll ;
Go seek them—but let pilot will control
Those passions which thy favouring winds can be.

No man shall place a limit in thy strength ;
Such triumphs as no mortal ever gained
May yet be thine if thou wilt but believe
In thy Creator and thyself. At length
Some feet will tread all heights now unattained—
Why not thine own ? Press on ; achieve ! achieve !

BELIEF

THE pain we have to suffer seems so broad,
Set side by side with this life's narrow span,
We need no greater evidence that God
Has some diviner destiny for man.

He would not deem it worth His while to send
Such crushing sorrows as pursue us here,
Unless beyond this fleeting journey's end
Our chastened spirits found another sphere.

WHATEVER IS—IS BEST

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So small this world! So vast its agonies!
A fuller life is needed to adjust
These ill-proportioned, wide discrepancies
Between the spirit and its frame of dust.

So when my soul writhes with some aching grief,
And all my heart-strings tremble at the strain,
My Reason lends new courage to Belief,
And all God's hidden purposes seem plain.

WHATEVER IS—IS BEST

I KNOW as my life grows older,
And mine eyes have clearer sight,
That under each rank wrong, somewhere
There lies the root of Right;
That each sorrow has its purpose,
By the sorrowing oft unguessed,
But as sure as the sun brings morning,
Whatever is—is best.

I know that each sinful action,
As sure as the night brings shade,
Is somewhere, sometime punished,
Though the hour be long delayed.
I know that the soul is aided
Sometimes by the heart's unrest,
And to grow means often to suffer—
But whatever is—is best.

PEACE AT THE GOAL

I know there are no errors
In the great Eternal plan,
And all things work together
For the final good of man.
And I know when my soul speeds onward,
In its grand Eternal quest,
I shall say as I look back earthward,
Whatever is—is best.

PEACE AT THE GOAL

FROM the soul of a man who was homeless
Came the deathless song of home ;
And the praises of rest are chanted best
By those who are forced to roam.

In a time of fast and hunger
We can talk over feasts divine ;
But the banquet done, why, where is the one
Who can tell you the taste of the wine ?

We think of the mountain's grandeur
As we walk in the heat afar ;
But when we sit in the shadows of it,
We think how at rest we are.

With the voice of the craving passions
We can picture a love to come ;
But the heart once filled, lo ! the voice is stilled,
And we stand in the silence—dumb.

THE LAW

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THE LAW

LIFF is a Shylock ; always it demands
The fullest usurer's interests for each pleasure.
Gifts are not freely scattered by its hands :
We make returns for every borrowed treasure.

Each talent, each achievement, and each gain
Necessitates some penalty to pay.
Delight imposes lassitude and pain,
As certainly as darkness follows day

All you bestow on causes or on men,
Of love or hate, of malice or devotion,
Somehow, sometime, shall be returned again—
There is no wasted toil, no lost emotion.

The motto of the world is give and take.
It gives you favours—out of sheer goodwill.
But unless speedy recompense you make,
You'll find yourself presented with its bill.

When rapture comes to thrill the heart of you,
Take it with tempered gratitude. Remember,
Some later time the interest will fall due.
No year brings June that does not bring December.

RECOMPENSE

STRAIGHT through my heart this fact
to-day,

By Truth's own hand is driven :
God never takes one thing away,
But something else is given.

I did not know in earlier years,
This law of love and kindness ;
I only mourned through bitter tears
My loss, in sorrow's blindness.

But, ever following each regret
O'er some departed treasure,
My sad repining heart was met
With unexpected pleasure.

I thought it only happened so ;
But Time this truth has taught me—
No least thing from my life can go,
But something else is brought me.

It is the Law, complete, sublime ;
And now, with Faith unshaken,
In patience I but bide my time
When any joy is taken.

DESIRE

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No matter if the rushing blow
May for the moment down me,
Still, back of it waits Love, I know,
With some new gift to crown me.

DESIRE

NO joy for which thy hungering heart has
panted,

No hope it cherishes through waiting years,
But, if thou dost deserve it, shall be granted,
For with each passionate wish the blessing nears.

Tune up the fine, strong instrument of thy being
To chord with thy dear hope, and do not tire.
When both in key and rhythm are agreeing,
Lo ! thou shalt kiss the lips of thy desire.

The thing thou cravest so waits in the distance,
Wrapt in the silences, unseen and dumb :
Essential to thy soul and thy existence—
Live worthy of it—call, and it shall come.

DEATHLESS

THERE lies in the centre of each man's heart
A longing and love for the good and pure ;
And if but an atom, or larger part,
I tell you this shall endure—endure
After the body has gone to decay—
Yea, after the world has passed away.

The longer I live and the more I see
Of the struggle of souls toward the heights above,
The stronger this truth comes home to me :
That the Universe rests on the shoulders of love ;
A love so limitless, deep, and broad,
That men have renamed it, and called it—God.

And nothing that ever was born or evolved,
Nothing created by light or force,
But deep in its system there lies dissolved
A shining drop from the Great Love Source
A shining drop that shall live for aye—
Though kingdoms may perish, and stars decay

KEEP OUT OF THE PAST

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KEEP OUT OF THE PAST

KEEP out of the Past ! for its highways
Are damp with malarial gloom ;
Its gardens are sere and its forests are drear,
And everywhere moulders a tomb.
Who seeks to regain its lost pleasures
Finds only a rose turn'd to dust ;
And its storehouse of wonderful treasures
Are covered and coated with rust.

Keep out of the Past ! It is haunted :
He who in its avenues gropes
Shall find there the ghost of a joy prize'd the most,
And a skeleton throng of dead hopes.
In place of its beautiful rivers
Are pools that are stagnant with slime ;
And these graves gleaming white in a phosphoric light
Hide dreams that were slain in their prime.

Keep out of the Past ! It is lonely,
And barren and bleak to the view ;
Its fires have grown cold, and its stories are old—
Turn, turn to the Present—the New :
To-day leads you up to the hilltops
That are kissed by the radiant sun,
To-day shows no tomb, life's hopes are in bloom,
And to-day holds a prize to be won.

THE FAULT OF THE AGE

THE fault of the age is a mad endeavour
To leap to heights that were made to climb :
By a burst of strength, of a thought most clever,
We plan to forestall and outwit Time.

We scorn to wait for the thing worth having ;
We want high noon at the day's dim dawn ;
We find no pleasure in toiling and saving,
As our forefathers did in the old times gone.

We force our roses before their season
To bloom and blossom for us to wear ;
And then we wonder and ask the reason
Why perfect buds are so few and rare.

We crave the gain, but despise the getting ;
We want wealth—not as reward, but dower ;
And the strength that is wasted in useless fretting
Would fell a forest or build a tower.

To covet the prize, yet to shrink from the winning ;
To thirst for glory, yet fear to fight ;
Why, what can it lead to at last but sinning,
To mental languor and moral blight ?

Better the old slow way of striving,
And counting small gains when the year is done,
Than to use our force and our strength in contriving
And to grasp for pleasure we have not won.

DISTRUST

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DISTRUST

DISTRUST that man who tells you to distrust ;
He takes the measure of his own small soul,
And thinks the world no larger. He who prates
Of human nature's baseness and deceit
Looks in the mirror of his heart, and sees
His kind therein reflected. Or perchance
The honeyed wine of life was turned to gall
By sorrow's hand, which brimmed his cup with tears,
And made all things seem bitter to his taste.
Give him compassion ! But be not afraid
Of nectared Love, or Friendship's strengthening draught,
Nor think a poison underlies their sweets.
Look through true eyes—you will discover truth ;
Suspect suspicion, and doubt only doubt.

ARTIST AND MAN

MAKE thy life better than thy work. Too oft
Our artists spend their skill in rounding soft
Fair curves upon their statues, while the rough
And ragged edges of the unhewn stuff
In their own natures startle and offend
The eye of critic and the heart of friend.

If in thy too brief day thou must neglect
Thy labour or thy life, let men detect
Flaws in thy work ; while their most searching gaze
Can fall on nothing which they may not praise
In thy well-chiselled character. The Man
Should not be shadowed by the Artisan!

MISCELLANEOUS

BABYLAND

HAVE you heard of the Valley of Babyland,
The realm where the dear little darlings stay
Till the kind storks go, as all men know,
And, oh! so tenderly bring them away!
The paths are winding, and past all finding
By all save the storks who understand
The gates and the highways and the intricate byways
That lead to Babyland.

All over the Valley of Babyland
Sweet flowers bloom in the soft green moss;
And under the ferns fair, and under the plants there,
Lie little heads like spools of floss.
With a soothing number the river of slumber
Flows o'er a bedway of silver sand;
And angels are keeping watch o'er the sleeping
Babes of Babyland.

The path to the Valley of Babyland
Only the kingly, kind storks know;
If they fly over mountains, or wade through fountains
No man sees them come or go.

But an angel maybe, who guards some baby,
Or a fairy perhaps, with her magic wand,
Brings them straightway to the wonderful gateway
That leads to Babyland.

And there in the Valley of Babyland,
Under the mosses and leaves and ferns,
Like an unfledged starling, they find the darling
For whom the heart of a mother yearns ;
And they lift him lightly, and snug him tightly
In feathers soft as a lady's hand ;
And off with a rockaway step they walk away
Out of Babyland.

As they go from the Valley of Babyland
Forth into the world of great unrest,
Sometimes in weeping he wakes from sleeping
Before he reaches the mother's breast.
Ah, how she blesses him, how she caresses him !
Bonniest bird in the bright home band
That o'er land and water the kind stork brought her
From far-off Babyland.

A FACE

BETWEEN the curtains of snowy lace,
Over the way is a baby's face ;
It peeps forth, smiling in merry glee,
And waves its pink little hand at me.

AN OLD COMRADE

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My heart responds with a lonely cry—
But in the wonderful By-and-By—
Out from the window of God's 'To Be,'
That other baby shall beckon to me.

That ever-haunting and longed-for face,
That perfect vision of infant grace,
Shall shine on me in a splendour of light,
Never to fade from my eager sight.

All that was taken shall be made good ;
All that puzzles me understood ;
And the wee white hand that I lost, one day
Shall lead me into the Better Way.

AN OLD COMRADE

ALL suddenly between me and the light,
That brightly shone and warm,
Robed in the pall-like garments of the night,
There rose a shadowy form.

'Stand back,' I said ; 'you quite obscure the sun ;
What do you want with me ?'
'Dost thou not know, then ?' quoth the mystic one ;
'Look on my face and see !'

I looked, and, lo ! it was my old despair,
Robed in a new disguise ;
In blacker garments than it used to wear,
But with the same sad eyes.

So ghostly were the memories it awoke,
I shrank in fear away.

'Nay, be more kind,' 'twas thus the dark shape spoke.
'For I have come to stay.

'So long thy feet have trod on sunny heights,
Such joys thy heart has known.
Perchance thou hast forgotten those long nights,
When we two watched alone

'Though sweet and dear the pleasures thou hast met,
And comely to thine eye,
Has one of them, in all that bright throng yet,
Been half so true as I?

'And that last rapture which ensnared thee so
With pleasure twin to pain,
It was the swiftest of them all to go—
But I—I will remain.

'Again we two will live a thousand years,
In desperate nights of grief,
That shall refuse the bitter balm of tears,
For thy bruised heart's relief.

'Again we two will watch the hopeless dawn
Creep up a lonely sky—
Again we'll urge the drear day to be gone,
Yet dread to see it die.

ENTRE-ACTE REVERIES

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'Nay, shrink not from me, for I am thy friend,
One whom the Master sent ;
And I shall help thee, ere we reach the end,
To find a great content.

'And I will give thee courage to attain
The heights supremely fair,
Wherein thou'lt cry, "How blessed was my pain !
How Godsent my Despair !"

ENTRE-ACTE REVERIES

BETWEEN the act while the orchestra played
That sweet old waltz with the lilting measure,
I drifted away to a dear dead day,
When the dance, for me, was the sum of all pleasure ;
When my veins were rife with the fever of life,
When hope ran high as an inswept ocean,
And my heart's great gladness was almost madness,
As I floated off to the music's motion.

How little I cared for the world outside !
How little I cared for the dull day after !
The thought of trouble went up like a bubble,
And burst in a sparkle of mirthful laughter.
Oh ! and the beat of it, oh ! and the sweet of it,
Melody, motion, and young blood melted ;
The dancers swaying, the players playing,
The air song-deluged and music-pelted,

I knew no weariness, no, not I—

My step was as light as the waving grasses
That fluttered with ease on the strong-armed breeze,
As it waltzes over the wild morasses.

Life was all sound and swing ; youth was a perfect
thing ;

Night was the goddess of satisfaction.
Oh, how I tripped away, right to the edge of day !
Joy lay in motion, and rest lay in action.

I dance no more on the music's wave,

I yield no more to its 'wilderer power ;
That time has flown like a rose that is blown,
Yet life is a garden for ever in flower.

Though storms of tears have watered the years
Between to-day and the day departed,
Though trials have met me, and grief's waves wet me,
And I have been tired and trouble-hearted.

Though under the sod of a wee green grave,
A great, sweet hope in darkness perished,
Yet life, to my thinking, is a cup worth drinking,
A gift to be glad of, and loved, and cherished.
There is deeper pleasure in the slower measure
That Time's grand orchestra now is playing ;
Its mellowed minor is sadder but finer,
And life grows daily more worth the living.

A PLEA

COLUMBIA, large-hearted and tender,
Too long for the good of your kin
You have shared your home's comfort and splendour
With all who have asked to come in.
The smile of your true eyes has lighted
The way to your wide-open door.
You have held out full hands, and invited
The beggar to take from your store.

Your overrun proud sister nations,
Whose offspring you help them to keep,
Are sending their poorest relations
Their unruly, vicious black sheep ;
Unwashed and unlettered you take them,
And lo ! we are pushed from your knee ;
We are governed by laws as they make them,
We are slaves in the land of the free.

Columbia, you know the devotion
Of those who have sprung from your soil ;
Shall aliens, born over the ocean,
Dispute us the fruits of our toil ?
Most noble and gracious of mothers,
Your children rise up and demand
That you bring us no more foster-brothers,
To breed discontent in the land.

Be prudent before you are zealous,
Not generous only—but just.
Our hearts are grown wrathful and jealous
Toward those who have outraged your trust.
They jostle and crowd in our places,
They sneer at the comforts you gave.
We say, shut the door in their faces—
Until they have learned to behave !

In hearts that are greedy and hateful,
They harbour ill-will and deceit ;
They ask for more favours, ungrateful
For those you have poured at their feet.
Rise up in your grandeur, and straightway
Bar out the bold, clamouring mass ;
Let sentinels stand at your gateway,
To see who is worthy to pass.

Give first to your own faithful toilers
The freedom our birthright should claim.
And take from these ruthless despoilers
The power which they use to our shame.
Columbia, too long you have dallied
With foes whom you feed from your store ;
It is time that your wardens were rallied,
And stationed outside the locked door.

THE ROOM BENEATH THE RAFTERS

SOMETIMES when I have dropped to sleep
Draped in a soft luxurious gloom,
Across my drowsing mind will creep
The memory of another room,
Where resinous knots in roof-boards made
A frescoing of light and shade,
And sighing poplars brushed their leaves
Against the humbly sloping eaves.

Again I fancy, in my dreams,
I'm lying in my trundle bed;
I seem to see the bare old beams
And unhewn rafters overhead.
The mud wasp's shrill falsetto hum
I hear again, and see him come
Forth from his dark-walled hanging house,
Dressed in his black and yellow blouse.

There, summer dawns, in sleep I stirred,
And wove into my fair dream's woof
The chattering of a martin bird,
Or rain-drops pattering on the roof
Or half awake, and half in fear,
I saw the spider spinning near
His pretty castle where the fly
Should come to ruin by and by.

188 THE ROOM BENEATH THE RAFTERS

And there I fashioned from my brain
Youth's shining structures in the air.
I did not wholly build in vain,
For some were lasting, firm and fair.
And I am one who lives to say
My life has held more gold than grey,
And that the splendour of the real
Surpassed my early dream's ideal.

But still I love to wander back
To that old time and that old place ;
To tread my way o'er memory's track,
And catch the early morning grace,
In that quaint room beneath the rafter,
That echoed to my childish laughter ;
To dream again the dreams that grew
More beautiful as they came true.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW

SHE was my dream's fulfilment and my joy,
This lovely woman whom you call your wife.
You sported at your play, an idle boy,
When I first felt the stirring of her life
Within my startled being. I was thrilled
With such intensity of love, it filled
The very universe ! But words are vain—
No man can comprehend that wild, sweet pain.

You smiled in childhood's slumber while I felt
The agonies of labour ; and the nights
I, weeping, o'er the little sufferer knelt,
You, wandering on through dreamland's fair
delights,
Flung out your lengthening limbs and slept and
grew ;
While I, awake, saved this dear wife for you.

She was my heart's loved idol and my pride.
I taught her all those graces which you praise ;
I dreamed of coming years, when at my side
She should lend lustre to my fading days,
Should cling to me (as she to you clings now),
The young fruit hanging to the withered bough.
But lo ! the blossom was so fair a sight,
You plucked it from me—for your own delight.

Well, you are worthy of her—oh, thank God !—
And yet I think you do not realise
How burning were the sands o'er which I trod,
To bear and rear this woman you so prize.
It was no easy thing to see her go—
Even into the arms of the one she worshipped so.

How strong, how vast, how awful seems the power
Of this new love which fills a maiden's heart
For one who never bore a single hour
Of pain for her ; which tears her life apart

From all its moorings, and controls her more
Than all the ties the years have held before ;
Which crowns a stranger with a kingly grace—
And gives the one who bore her—second place !

She loves me still ! and yet, were Death to say,
'Chose now between them !' you would be her
choice.

God meant it to be so—it is His way.

But can you wonder if, while I rejoice
In her content, this thought hurts like a knife—
'No longer necessary to her life !'

My pleasure in her joy is bitter sweet.

Your very goodness sometimes hurts my heart,
Because, for her, life's drama seems complete

Without the mother's oft-repeated part.
Be patient with me ! She was mine so long
Who now is yours. One must indeed be strong
'To meet the loss without the least regret.
And so, forgive me if my eyes are wet.

AN OLD FAN

(TO KITTY. HER REVERIE)

IT is is soiled and quite *passé*,
Broken too, and out of fashion,
But it stirs my heart some way,
As I hold it here to-day,
With a dead year's grace and passion
Oh, my pretty fan !

Precious dream and thrilling strain,
Rise up from that vanished season ;
Back to heart and nerve and brain
Sweeps the joy as keen as pain,
Joy that asks no cause or reason.
Oh, my dainty fan !

Hopes that perished in a night
Gaze at me like spectral faces ;
Grim despair and lost delight,
Sorrow long since gone from sight—
All are hiding in these laces.
Oh, my broken fan !

Let us lay the thing away—
I am sadder now and older ;
Fled the ballroom and the play—
You have had your foolish day,
And the night and life are colder.
Exit—little fan !

NO CLASSES

NO classes here ! Why, that is idle talk.
The village beau sneers at the country boor ;
The importuning mendicants who walk
Our cities' streets despise the parish poor.

The daily toiler at some noisy loom
Holds back her garments from the kitchen aid.
Meanwhile the latter leans upon her broom,
Unconscious of the bow the laundress made.

The grocer's daughter eyes the farmer's lass
With haughty glances ; and the lawyer's wife
Would pay no visits to the trading class,
If policy were not her creed in life.

The merchant's son nods coldly at the clerk ;
The proud possessor of a pedigree
Ignores the youth whose father rose by work ;
The title-seeking maiden scorns all three.

The aristocracy of blood looks down
Upon the *nouveau riche* ; and in disdain,
The lovers of the intellectual frown
On both, and worship at the shrine of brain.

'No classes here,' the clergyman has said ;
'We are one family.' Yet see his rage
And horror when his favourite son would wed
Some pure and pretty player on the stage.

A GREY MOOD

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It is the vain but natural human way
Of vaunting our weak selves, our pride, our worth
Not till the long-delayed millennial day
Shall we behold 'no classes' on God's earth.

A GREY MOOD

AS we hurry away to the end, my friend,
Of this sad little farce called existence,
We are sure that the future will bring one thing,
And that is the grave in the distance.
And so when our lives run along all wrong,
And nothing seems real or certain,
We can comfort ourselves with the thought (or not)
Of that spectre behind the curtain.

But we haven't much time to repine or whine,
Or to wound or jostle each other ;
And the hour for us each is to-day, I say,
If we mean to assist a brother.
And there is no pleasure that earth gives birth,
But the worry it brings is double ;
And all that repays for the life of life,
Is helping some soul in trouble.

I tell you, if I could go back the track
To my life's morning hour,
I would not set forth seeking name or fame,
Or that poor bauble called power.

I would be like the sunlight, and live to give;
I would lend, but I would not borrow;
Nor would I be blind and complain of pain,
Forgetting the meaning of sorrow.

This world is a vaporous jest at best,
Tossed off by the gods in laughter;
And a cruel attempt at wit were it
If nothing better came after.
It is reeking with hearts that ache and break,
Which we ought to comfort and strengthen,
As we hurry away to the end, my friend,
And the shadows behind us lengthen.

AT AN OLD DRAWER

BEFORE this scarf was faded,
What hours of mirth it knew
How gaily it paraded
For smiling eyes to view!
The days were tinged with glory,
The nights too quickly sped,
And life was like a story
Where all the people wed.

Before this rosebud wilted,
How passionate!; sweet
The wild waltz swelled and lilted
In time for flying feet!

How loud the bassoons muttered !
The horns grew madly shrill ;
And, oh ! the vows lips uttered
That hearts could not fulfil.

Before this fan was broken,
Behind its lace and pearl
What whispered words were spoken—
What hearts were in a whirl !
What homesteads were selected
In Fancy's realm of Spain !
What castles were erected,
Without a room for pain !

When this odd glove was mated,
How thrilling seemed the play !
Maybe our hearts are sated—
They tire so soon to-day.
Oh, shut away those treasures,
They speak the dreary truth—
We have outgrown the pleasures
And keen delights of youth

THE OLD STAGE QUEEN

BACK in the box by the curtains shaded,
She sits alone by the house unseen ;
Her eye is dim, her cheek is faded,
She who was once the people's queen.

The curtain rolls up, and she sees before her
A vision of beauty and youth and grace.
Ah ! no wonder all hearts adore her,
Silver-throated and fair of face.

Out of her box she leans and listens ;
Oh, is it with pleasure or with despair
That her thin cheek pales and her dim eye glistens,
While that fresh young voice sings the grand old air ?

She is back again in the past's bright splendour—
When life seemed worth living, and love a truth.
Ere Time had told her she must surrender
Her double dower of fame and youth.

It is she herself who stands there singing
To that sea of faces that shines and stirs ;
And the cheers on cheers that go up ringing
And rousing the echoes—are hers—all hers.

Just for one moment the sweet delusion
Quickens her pulses and blurs her sight,
And wakes within her that wild confusion
Of joy that is anguish and fierce delight.

THE OLD STAGE QUEEN

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Then the curtain goes down and the lights are gleaming
Brightly o'er circle and box and stall.

She starts like a sleeper who wakes from dreaming—
Her past lies under a funeral pall.

Her day is dead and her star descended

Never to rise or shine again ;

Her reign is over—her Queenship ended—

A new name is sounded and sung by men.

All the glitter and glow and splendour,

All the glory of that lost day,

With the friends that seemed true, and the love that
seemed tender,

Why, what is it all but a dead bouquet ?

She rises to go. Has the night turned colder ;

The new Queen answers to call and shout ;

And the old Queen looks back over her shoulder,

Then all unnoticed she passes out.

FAITH

I WILL not doubt, though all my ships at sea
Come drifting home with broken masts and sails ;

I shall believe the Hand which never fails,

From seeming evil worketh good for me ;

And though I weep because those sails are battered,

Still will I cry, while my best hopes lie shattered,

'I trust in Thee.'

I will not doubt, though all my prayers return
Unanswered from the still, white Realm above ;
I shall believe it is an all-wise Love
Which has refused those things for which I yearn ;
And though at times I cannot keep from grieving,
Yet the pure ardour of my fixed believing
Undimmed shall burn.

I will not doubt, though sorrows fall like rain,
And troubles swarm like bees about a hive ;
I shall believe the heights for which I strive
Are only reached by anguish and by pain ;
And though I groan and tremble with my crosses,
I yet shall see, through my severest losses,
The greater gain.

I will not doubt ; well-anchored in the faith,
Like some staunch ship, my soul braves every gale ;
So strong its courage that it will not fail
To breast the mighty unknown sea of Death.
Oh, may I cry when body parts with spirit,
'I do not doubt,' so listening worlds may hear it,
With my last breath.

THE TRUE KNIGHT

WE sigh above historic pages,
Brave with the deeds of courtly men
And wish those peers of middle ages
In our dull day could live again,
And yet no knight or troubador began
In chivalry with the American.

He does not frequent joust or tourney,
And flaunt his lady's colours there;
But in the tedium of a journey,
He shows that deferential care—
That thoughtful kindness to the sex at large,
Which makes each woman feel herself his charge.

He does not challenge foes to due'
To win his lady's cast-off glove,
But proves in ways less rash and cruel
The truth and fervour of his love.
Not by bold deeds, but by his reverent mien,
He pays his public tribute to his Queen.

He may not shine with courtly graces,
But yet, his kind, respectful air
To woman, whatso'er her place is,
It might be well if kings could share.
So, for the chivalric true gentleman,
Give me, I say, our own American.

THE CITY

I OWN the charms of lovely Nature ; still,
In human nature more delight I find.
Though sweet the murmuring voices of the rill,
I much prefer the voices of my kind.

I like the roar of cities. In the mart,
Where busy toilers strive for place and gain,
I seem to read humanity's great heart,
And share its hopes, its pleasures, and its pain.

The rush of hurrying trains that cannot wait,
The tread of myriad feet, all say to me,
'You are the architect of your own fate :
Toil on, hope on, and dare to do and be.

I like the jangled music of the loud
Bold Bells ; the whistle's sudden shrill reply ;
And there is inspiration in a crowd—
A magnetism flashed from eye to eye.

My sorrows all seem lightened, and my joys
Augmented, when the comrade world walks near ;
Close to mankind my soul best keeps its poise.
Give me the great town's bustle, strife, and noise,
And let who will hold Nature's calm more dear.

WOMAN

GIVE us that grand word 'woman' once again,
And let's have done with 'lady': one's a term
Full of fine force, strong, beautiful, and firm,
Fit for the noblest use of tongue or pen;
And one's a word for lackeys. One suggests
The Mother, Wife, and Sister! One the dame
Whose costly robe, mayhap, gives her the name.
One word upon its own strength leans and rests;
The other minces tiptoe. Who would be
The perfect woman must grow brave of heart
And broad of soul to play her troubled part
Well in Life's drama. While each day we see
The 'perfect lady' skilled in what to do
And what to say, grace in each tone and act
(*'Tis taught in schools, but needs some native tact*),
Yet narrow in her mind as in her shoe.
Give the first place then to the nobler phrase,
And leave the lesser word for lesser praise.

THE SOUL'S FAREWELL TO
THE BODY

SO we must part for ever; and although
I long have beat my wings and cried to go,
Free from your narrow limiting control,
Forth into space, the true home of the soul.

Yet now, yet now that hour is drawing near,
I pause reluctant, finding you so dear.
All joys await me in the realm of God—
Must you, my comrade, moulder in the sod?

I was your captive, yet you were my slave;
Your prisoner, yet obedience you gave
To all my earnest wishes and commands
Now to the worm I leave those willing hands

That toiled for me or held the books I read
Those feet that trod where'er I wished to tread,
Those arms that clasped my dear ones, and the
breast
On which one loved and loving heart found rest.

Those lips through which my prayers to God have
risen,
Those eyes that were the windows of my prison.
From all these Death's Angel bid me sever;
Dear Comrade Body, fare thee well for ever!

THIMBLE ISLANDS

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I go to my inheritance, and go
With joy that only the freed soul can know ;
Yet in my spirit wanderings I trust
I may sometimes pause near your sacred dust.

THIMBLE ISLANDS

(OFF LONG ISLAND SOUND)

BETWEEN the shore and the distant sky-lands,
Where a ship's dim shape seems etched on space
There lies this cluster of lovely islands,
Like laughing mermaids grouped in grace.

I look out over the waves and wonder,
Are they not sirens who dwell in the sea ?
When the tide runs high they dip down under
Like mirthful bathers who sport in glee.

When the tide runs low they lift their shoulders
Above the billows and gaily spread
Their soft green garments along the boulders
Of grim grey granite that form their bed.

Close by the group, in sheltered places,
Many a ship at anchor lies,
And drinks the charm of their smiling faces,
As lovers drink smiles from maidens' eyes.

But true to the harsh and stern old ocean,
As maids in a harem are true to one,
They give him all of their heart's devotion,
Though wooed for ever by moon and sun.

A ship sails on that has bravely waded
Through foaming billows to sue in vain ;
A whip-poor-will flies that has serenaded
And sung unanswered his plaintive strain.

In the sea's great arms I see them lying,
Bright and beaming and fond and fair,
While the jealous July day is dying
In a crimson fury of mad despair.

The desolate moon drifts slowly over,
And covers its face with the lace of a cloud,
While the sea, like a glad triumphant lover,
Clasps close his islands and laughs aloud.

MY GRAVE

IF, when I die, I must be buried, let
No cemetery engulph me—no lone grot,
Where the great palpitating world comes not,
Save when, with heart bowed down and eyelids wet,
It pays its last sad melancholy debt
To some outjourneying pilgrim. May my lot
Be rather to lie in some much-used spot,
Where human life, with all its noise and fret,

Throbs on about me. Let the roll of wheels,
With all earth's sounds of pleasure, commerce, love,
And rush of hurrying feet, surge o'er my head.
Even in my grave I shall be one who feels
Close kinship with the pulsing world above ;
And too deep silence would distress me, dead.

REFUTED

'Anticipation is sweeter than realisation.'

IT may be, yet I have not found it so.
In those first golden dreams of future fame
I did not find such happiness as came
When toil was crowned with triumph. Now I know
My words have recognition, and will go
Straight to some listening heart, my early aim,
To win the idle glory of a name,
Pales like a candle in the noonday's glow.

So with the deeper joys of which I dreamed :
Life yields more rapture than did childhood's fancies,
And each year brings more pleasure than I waited.
Friendship proves truer than of old it seemed,
And, all beyond youth's passion-hued romances,
Love is more perfect than anticipated.

THE LOST LAND

THERE is a story of a beauteous land,
Where fields were fertile and where flowers
were bright ;

Where tall towers glistened in the morning light,
Where happy children wandered hand in hand,
Where lovers wrote their names upon the sand.
They say it vanished from all human sight ;
The hungry sea devoured it in a night.
You doubt the tale ? ah, you will understand ;
For, as men muse upon that fable old,
They give sad credence always at the last,
However they have cavilled at its truth,
When with a tear-dimmed vision they behold,
Swift sinking in the ocean of the Past,
The lovely lost Atlantis of their Youth.

THE SOUTH

A QUEEN of indolence and idle grace,
Robed in the vestments of a costly gown,
She turns the languor of her lovely face
Upon progression with a lazy frown.

Her throne is built upon a marshy down ·
Malarial mosses wreath her like old lace ;

With slim crossed feet, unshod and bare and brown,
She sits indifferent to the world's swift race.

Across the seas there stalks an ogre grim:
Too languid she for even fear's alarms,
While frightened nations rally in defence,
She lifts her smiling Creole eyes to him,
And reaching out her shapely unwashed arms
She clasps her rightful lover—Pestilence.

A SAILOR'S WIFE

(HER MEMORY)

SUN in my lattice, and sun on the sea
(Oh, but the sun is fair),
And a sky of blue and a sea of green,
And a ship with the white, white sail between,
And a light wind blowing free—
And back from the stern, and forth from the land,
The last farewell of a waving hand.

Mist on the window and mist on the sea
(Oh, but the mist is grey),
And the weird, tall shape of a spectral mast
Gleams out of the fog like a ghost of my past,
And the old hope stirs in me—
The old, old hope that warred with doubt,
While the years with the tide surged in and out.

LIFE'S JOURNEY

Rain on my window and rain on the sea
 (Oh, but the rain is sad),
And only the dreams of a vanished barque
And a vanished youth shine through the dark,
 And torture the night and me.
But somewhere, I think, near some fair strand
That lost ship lies with its waving hand.

LIFE'S JOURNEY

AS we speed out of youth's sunny station,
The track seems to shine in the light,
But it suddenly shoots over chasms
 Or sinks into tunnels of night.
And the hearts that were brave in the morning
 Are filled with repining and fears,
As they pause at the City of Sorrow
 Or pass through the Valley of Tears.

But the road of this perilous journey
 The hand of the Master has made ;
With all its discomforts and dangers,
 We need not be sad or afraid.
Paths leading from light into darkness,
 Ways plunging from gloom to despair,
Wind out through the tunnels of midnight
 To fields that are blooming and fair.

Though the rocks and the shadows surround us,
Though we catch not one gleam of the day,
Above us fair cities are laughing,
And dipping white feet in some bay.
And always, eternal, for ever,
Down over the hills in the west,
The last final end of our journey,
There lies the Great Station of Rest.

'Tis the Grand Central point of all railways,
All roads unite here when they end ;
'Tis the final resort of all tourists,
All rival lines meet here and blend.
All tickets, all mile-books, all passes,
If stolen or begged for or bought,
On whatever road or division,
Will bring you at last to this spot.

If you pause at the City of Trouble,
Or wait in the Valley of Tears,
Be patient, the train will move onward,
And rush down the track of the years.
Whatever the place is you seek for,
Whatever your game or your quest,
You shall come at the last with rejoicing,
To the beautiful City of Rest.

THE DISAPPOINTED

You shall store all your baggage of worries,
You shall feel perfect peace in this realm,
You shall sail with old friends on fair waters,
With joy and delight at the helm.
You shall wander in cool, fragrant gardens
With those who have loved you the best,
And the hopes that were lost in life's journey
You shall find in the City of Rest.

THE DISAPPOINTED

THERE are songs enough for the hero
Who dwells on the heights of fame ;
I sing for the disappointed—
For those who have missed their aim.

I sing with a tearful cadence
For one who stands in the dark,
And knows that his last, best arrow
Has bounded back from the mark.

I sing for the breathless runner,
The eager, anxious soul,
Who falls with his strength exhausted,
Almost in sight of the goal ;

For the hearts that break in silence,
With a sorrow all unknown,
For those who need companions,
Yet walk their ways alone.

THE DISAPPOINTED

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There are songs enough for the lovers
Who share love's tender pain,
I sing for the one whose passion
Is given all in vain.

For those whose spirit comrades
Have missed them on the way,
I sing, with a heart o'erflowing,
This minor strain to-day.

And I know the Solar system
Must somewhere keep in space
A prize for that spent runner
Who barely lost the race.

For the plan would be imperfect
Unless it held some sphere
That paid for the toil and talent
And love that are wasted here.

FISHING

MAYBE this is fun, sitting in the sun,
With a book and parasol, as my Angler wishes,
While he dips his line in the ocean brine,
Under the impression that his bait will catch the fishes

'Tis romantic, yes, but I must confess

Thoughts of shady rooms at home somehow seem more
inviting.

But I dare not move—' Quiet, there, my love !'

Says my Angler, ' for I think a monster fish is biting.'

Oh, of course it's bliss, but how hot it is !

And the rock I'm sitting on grows harder every
minute ;

Still my fisher waits, trying various baits,

But the basket at his side I see has nothing in it.

Oh, it's just the way to pass a July day,

Arcadian and sentimental, dreamy, idle, charming,

But how fierce the sunlight falls ! and the way that insect
crawls

Along my neck and down my back is really quite
alarming.

' Any luck ?' I gently ask of the Angler at his task,

' There's something pulling at my line,' he says ; ' I've
almost caught it.'

But when with blistered face we our homeward steps
retrace,

We take the little basket just as empty as we brought it.

A PIN

O H, I know a certain lady who is reckoned with the
good,
Yet she fills me with more terror than a raging lion
would.
The little chills run up and down my spine whenc'er we
meet,
Though she seems a gentle creature, and she's very trim
and neat.

And she has a thousand virtues and not one acknowledged
sin,
But she is the sort of person you could liken to a pin.
And she pricks you and she sticks you in a way that can't
be said.
If you seek for what has hurt you—why, you cannot find
the head !

But she fills you with discomfort and exasperating pain.
If anybody asks you why, you really can't explain !
A pin is such a tiny thing, of that there is no doubt,
Yet when it's sticking in your flesh you're wretched till
it's out.

She's wonderfully observing—when she meets a pretty
girl,
She is always sure to tell her if her hair is out of curl ;

And she is so sympathetic to her friend who's much
admired,
She is often heard remarking, 'Dear, you look so worn
and tired.'

And she is an honest critic, for on yesterday she eyed
The new dress I was airing with a woman's natural pride,
And she said, 'Oh, how becoming!' and then gently
added, 'it
Is really a misfortune that the basque is such a fit.

Then she said, 'If you had heard me yester eve, I'm
sure, my friend,
You would say I was a champion who knows how to
defend.'

And she left me with a feeling—most unpleasant, I ave.—
That the whole world would despise me if it hadn't been
for her.

Whenever I encounter her, in such a nameless way
She gives me the impression I am at my worst that day.
And the hat that was imported (and which cost me half
a sonnet),
With just one glance from her round eyes becomes a
Bowery bonnet.

She is always bright and smiling, sharp and pointed for
a thrust;
Use does not seem to blunt her point, nor does she gather
rust.

THE ACTOR

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Oh ! I wish some hapless specimen of mankind would
begin
To tidy up the world for me, by picking up this pin !

THE ACTOR

O MAN, with your wonderful dower,
O woman, with genius and grace,
You can teach the whole world with your power,
If you are but worthy the place.
The stage is a force and a factor
In moulding the thought of the day,
If only the heart of the actor
Is high as the theme of the play.
No discourse or sermon can reach us
Through feeling to reason like you ;
No author can stir us and teach us
With lessons as subtle and true.
Your words and your gestures obeying
We weep or rejoice with your part,
And the player, behind all his playing,
He ought to be great as his art.
No matter what rôle you are giving,
No matter what skill you betray,
The everyday life you are living
Is certain to colour the play.

THE ACTOR

The thoughts we call secret and hidden
 Are creatures of malice, in fact ;
 They steal forth unseen and unbidden,
 And permeate motive and act.

The genius that shines like a comet
 Fills only one part of God's plan,
 If the lesson the world derives from it
 Is marred by the life of the man.
 Be worthy your work if you love it ;
 The king should be fit for the crown ;
 Stand high as your art, or above it,
 And make us look up and not down.

ILLOGICAL

SHE stood beside me while I gave an
 order for a bonnet.
 She shuddered when I said, 'And put
 a bright bird's wing upon it.

A member of the Audubon Society was she ;
 And cutting were her comments made on
 worldly folks like me.

She spoke about the helpless birds we wickedly
 were harming ;
 She quoted the statistics, and they really
 were alarming ;

ILLOGICAL

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She said God meant His little birds to sing
in trees and skies ;
And there was pathos in her voice, and
tears were in her eyes.

'Oh, surely in this beauteous world you
can find lovely things
Enough to trim your hats,' she said, 'with-
out the dear birds' wings.'

I sat beside her that same day, in her
own house at dinner :
Angelic being that she was to entertain
a sinner !

Her well-appointed table groaned
beneath the ample spread ;
Course followed appetising course, and
hunger sated fled ;

But still my charming hostess urged, 'Do
have a reed-bird, dear,
They are so delicate and sweet
at this time of the year.

NEW YEAR

I SAW on the hills of the morning
The form of the New Year arise,
He stood like a statue adorning
The world with a background of skies.
There were courage and grace in his beautiful face,
And hope in his glorious eyes.

'I come from Time's boundless forever,'
He said, with a voice like a song.
'I come as a friend to endeavour,
I come as a foe to all wrong.
To the sad and afraid I bring promise of aid,
And the weak I will gird and make strong.

'I bring you more blessings than terrors,
I bring you more sunlight than gloom,
I tear out your page of old errors,
And hide them away in Time's tomb.
I reach you clean hands, and lead on to the lands
Where the lilies of peace are in bloom.'

NEW YEAR

AS the old year sinks down in Time's ocean,
Stand ready to launch with the new,
And waste no regrets, no emotion,
As the masts and the spars pass from view.
Weep not if some treasures go under
And sink in the rotten ship's hold,
That blithe bonny barque sailing yonder
May bring you more wealth than the old.

For the world is for ever improving,
All the past is not worth one to-day,
And whatever deserves our true loving
Is stronger than death or decay.
Old love, was it wasted devotion?
Old friends, were they weak or untrue?
Well, let them sink there in mid-ocean,
And gaily sail on to the new.

Throw overboard toil misdirected,
Throw overboard ill-advised hope,
With aims which, your soul has detected,
Have self as their centre and scope;
Throw overboard useless regretting
For deeds which you cannot undo,
And learn the great art of forgetting
Old things which embitter the new.

Sing who will of dead years departed,
I shroud them and bid them adieu,
And the song that I sing, happy-hearted
Is a song of the glorious new.

NOW

ONE looks behind him to some vanished time,
And says, 'Ah, I was happy then, alack !
I did not know it was my life's best prime—
Oh, if I could go back !'

Another looks, with eager eyes aglow,
To some glad day of joy that yet will dawn,
And sighs, 'I shall be happy then, I know ;
Oh, let me hurry on !'

But I—I look out on my fair To-day ;
I clasp it close, and kiss its radiant brow.
Here with the perfect present let me stay,
For I am happy now !

POEMS OF CHEEK

WORTH WHILE

IT is easy enough to be pleasant
When life flows by like a song,
But the man worth while is the one who will smile
When everything goes dead wrong.
For the test of the heart is trouble,
And it always comes with the years,
And the smile that is worth the praises of earth
Is the smile that shines through tears.

It is easy enough to be prudent
When nothing tempts you to stray,
When without or within no voice of sin
Is luring your soul away ;
But it's only a negative virtue
Until it is tried by fire,
And the life that is worth the honour on earth
Is the one that resists desire.

By the cynic, the sad, the fallen,
Who had no strength for the strife,
The world's highway is cumbered to-day—
They make up the sum of life ;

But the virtue that conquers passion,
And the sorrow that hides in a smile—
It is these that are worth the homage on earth
For we find them but once in a whil .

THE HOUSE OF LIFE

ALL wondering, and eager-eyed, within her portico
I made my plea to Hostess Life, one morning
long ago.

‘Pray show me this great house of thine, nor close a
single door ;

But let me wander where I will, and climb from floor
to floor !

For many rooms, and curious things, and treasures great
and small

Within your spacious mansion lie, and I would see them
all.’

Then Hostess Life turned silently, her searching gaze
on me,

And with no word, she reached her hand, and offered up
the key.

It opened first the door of Hope, and long I lingered
there,

Until I spied the room of Dreams, just higher by a stair.

THE HOUSE OF LIFE

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And then a door whereon the one word 'Happiness'
was writ ;

But when I tried the little key I could not make it fit.

It turned the lock of Pleasure's room, where first all
seemed so bright—

But after I had stayed awhile it somehow lost its light.

And wandering down a lonely hall, I came upon a room
Marked 'Duty,' and I entered it—to lose myself in
gloom.

Along the shadowy halls I groped my weary way about,
And found that from dull Duty's room, a door of Toil
led out.

It led out to another door, whereon a crimson stain
Made sullenly against the dark these words: 'The
Room of Pain.'

But oh the light, the light, the light, that spilled down
from above,

And upward wound the stairs of Faith, right to the Tower
of Love !

And when I came forth from that place, I tried the little
key—

And lo ! the door of Happiness swung open, wide and
free

A SONG OF LIFE

IN the rapture of life and of living,
I lift up my heart and rejoice,
And I thank the great Giver for giving
The soul of my gladness a voice.
In the glow of the glorious weather,
In the sweet-scented, sensuous air,
My burdens seem light as a feather—
They are nothing to bear.

In the strength and the glory of power,
In the pride and the pleasure of wealth
(For who dares dispute me my dower
Of talents and youth-time and health?),
I can laugh at the world and its sages—
I am greater than seers who are sad,
For he is most wise in all ages
Who knows how to be glad.

I lift up my eyes to Appollo,
The god of the beautiful days,
And my spirit soars off like a swallow,
And is lost in the light of its rays.
Are you troubled and sad? I beseech you
Come out of the shadows of strife—
Come out in the sun while I teach you
The secret of life.

A SONG OF LIFE

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Come out of the world—come above it—
Up over its crosses and graves,
Though the green earth is fair and I love it,
We must love it as masters, not slaves.
Come up where the dust never rises—
But only the perfume of flowers—
And your life shall be glad with surprises
Of beautiful hours.
Come up where the rare golden wine is
Apollo distils in my sight,
And your life shall be happy as mine is,
And as full of delight.

PRAYER

I DO not undertake to say
That literal answers come from Heaven,
But I know this—that when I pray
A comfort, a support is given
That helps me rise o'er earthly things
As larks soar up on airy wings.

In vain the wise philosopher
Points out to me my fabric's flaws,
In vain the scientists aver
That 'all things are controlled by laws.'
My life has taught me day by day
That it availeth much to pray.

I do not stop to reason out
The why and how. I do not care,
Since I know this, that when I doubt,
Life seems a blackness of despair,
The world a tomb ; and when I trust,
Sweet blossoms spring up in the dust.

Since I know in the darkest hour,
If I lift up my soul in prayer,
Some sympathetic, loving Power
Sends hope and comfort to me there.
Since balm is sent to ease my pain,
What need to argue or explain ?

Prayer has a sweet, refining grace,
It educates the soul and heart.
It lends a lustre to the face,
And by its elevating art
It gives the mind an inner sight
That brings it near the Infinite.

From our gross selves it helps us rise
To something which we yet may be,
And so I ask not to be wise,
If thus my faith is lost to me.
Faith, that with angel's voice and touch
Says, ' Pray, for prayer availeth much.'

IN THE LONG RUN

IN the long run fame finds the deserving man.
 The lucky wight may prosper for a day,
 But in good time true merit leads the van,
 And vain pretence, unnoticed, goes its way.
 There is no Chance, no Destiny, no Fate,
 But Fortune smiles on those who work and wait,
 In the long run.

In the long run all godly sorrow pays,
 There is no better thing than righteous pain,
 The sleepless nights, the awful thorn-crowned days,
 Bring sure reward to tortured soul and brain
 Unmeaning joys enervate in the end,
 But sorrow yields a glorious dividend
 In the long run.

In the long run all hidden things are known,
 The eye of truth will penetrate the night,
 And good or ill, thy secret shall be known,
 However well 'tis guarded from the light.
 All the unspoken motives of the breast
 Are fathomed by the years and stand confess'd
 In the long run.

AS YOU GO THROUGH LIFE

In the long run all love is paid by love,
Though undervalued by the hosts of earth ;
The great eternal Government above
Keeps strict account and will redeem its worth.
Give thy love freely ; do not count the cost ;
So beautiful a thing was never lost
In the long run.

AS YOU GO THROUGH LIFE

DON'T look for the flaws as you go through life
And even when you find them,
It is wise and kind to be somewhat blind,
And look for the virtue behind them ;
For the cloudiest night has a hint of light
Somewhere in its shadows hiding ;
It's better by far to hunt for a star,
Than the spots on the sun abiding.

The current of life runs ever away
To the bosom of God's great ocean.
Don't set your force 'gainst the river's course,
And think to alter its motion.
Don't waste a curse on the universe,
Remember, it lived before you ;
Don't butt at the storm with your puny form,
But bend and let it go o'er you.

TWO SUNSETS

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The world will never adjust itself
To suit your whims to the letter,
Some things must go wrong your whole life long,
And the sooner you know it the better.
It is folly to fight with the Infinite,
And go under at last in the wrestle.
The wiser man shapes into God's plan,
As water shapes into a vessel.

TWO SUNSETS

IN the fair morning of his life,
When his pure heart lay in his breast,
Panting, with all that wild unrest
To plunge into the great world's strife
That fills young hearts with mad desire,
He saw a sunset. Red and gold
The burning billows surged and rolled,
And upward tossed their caps of fire.
He looked. And as he looked, the sight
Sent from his soul through breast and brain
Such intense joy, it hurt like pain.
His heart seemed bursting with delight.
So near the Unknown seemed, so close
He might have grasped it with his hand.
He felt his inmost soul expand,
As sunlight will expand a rose.

One day he heard a singing strain—
A human voice, in bird-like trills.
He paused, and little rapture-rills
Went trickling downward through each vein.

And in his heart the whole day long,
As in a temple veiled and dim,
He kept and bore about with him
The beauty of that singer's song.

And then? But why relate what then?
His smouldering heart flamed into fire—
He had his one supreme desire,
And plunged into the world of men.

For years queen Folly held her sway.
With pleasures of the grosser kind
She fed his flesh and drugged his mind,
Till, shamed, he sated, turned away.

He sought his boyhood's home. That hour
Triumphant should have been, in sooth,
Since he went forth, an unknown youth,
And came back crowned with wealth and power.

The clouds made day a gorgeous bed;
He saw the splendour of the sky
With unmoved heart and stolid eye;
He only knew the West was red.

TWO SUNSETS

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Then suddenly a fresh young voice
Rose, bird-like, from some hidden place,
He did not even turn his face—
It struck him simply as a noise.

He trod the old paths up and down.
Their rich-hued leaves by Fall winds whirled—
How dull they were—how dull the world—
Dull even in the pulsing town.

O! worst of punishments, that brings
A blunting of all finer sense,
A loss of feelings keen, intense,
And dulls us to the higher things.

O! penalty most dire, most sure,
Swift following after gross delights,
That we no more see beauteous sights,
Or hear as hear the good and pure.

O! shape more hideous and more dread
Than Vengeance takes in creed-taught minds,
This certain doom that blunts and blinds,
And strikes the holiest feelings dead.

UNREST

IN the youth of the year, when the birds were building,

When the green was showing on tree and hedge,
And the tenderest light of all lights was gilding
The world from zenith to outermost edge,
My soul grew sad and longingly lonely !

I sighed for the season of sun and rose,
And I said, 'In the Summer and that time only
Lies sweet contentment and blest repose.'

With bee and bird for her maids of honour
Came Princess Summer in robes of green.
And the King of day smiled down upon her
And wooed her, and won her, and made her queen.
Fruit of their union and true love's pledges,
Beautiful roses bloomed day by day,
And rambled in gardens and hid in hedges
Like royal children in sportive play.

My restless soul for a little season
Revelled in rapture of glow and bloom,
And then, like a subject who harbours treason,
Grew full of rebellion and grey with gloom.
And I said, 'I am sick of the summer's blisses,
Of warmth and beauty, and nothing more.
The full fruition my sad soul misses
That beauteous Fall-time holds in store !'

‘ARTIST’S LIFE’

23

But now when the colours are almost blinding,
Burning and blending on bush and tree,
And the rarest fruits are mine for the finding,
And the year is ripe as a year can be,
My soul complains in the same old fashion ;
Crying aloud in my troubled breast
Is the same old longing, the same old passion.
O where is the treasure which men call rest ?

‘ARTIST’S LIFE’

O F all the waltzes the great Strauss wrote,
Mad with melody, rhythm—rife
From the very first to the final note,
Give me his ‘Artist’s Life !’

It stirs my blood to my finger-ends,
Thrills me and fills me with vague unrest,
And all that is sweetest and saddest blends
Together within my breast.

It brings back that night in the dim arcade,
In love’s sweet morning and life’s best prime,
When the great brass orchestra played and played,
And set our thoughts to rhyme.

It brings back that Winter of mad delights,
Of leaping pulses and tripping feet,
And those languid moon-washed Summer nights
When we heard the band in the street.

NOTHING BUT STONES

It brings back rapture and glee and glow,
 It brings back passion and pain and strife,
 And so of all the waltzes I know,
 Give me the 'Artist's Life.'

For it is so full of the dear old time—
 So full of the dear old friends I knew.
 And under its rhythm, and lilt, and rhyme,
 I am always finding—*you*.

NOTHING BUT STONES

I THINK I never passed so sad an hour,
 Dear friend, as that one at the church to-night.
 The edifice from basement to the tower
 Was one resplendent blaze of coloured light.
 Up through broad aisles the stylish crowd was thronging,
 Each richly robed like some king's bidden guest.
 'Here will I bring my sorrow and my longing,'
 said, 'and here find rest.'

I heard the heavenly organ's voice of thunder,
 It seemed to give me infinite relief.
 I wept. Strange eyes looked on in well-bred wonder.
 I dried my tears : their gaze profaned my grief.
 Wrapt in the costly furs, and silks, and laces,
 Beat alien hearts, that had no part with me.
 I could not read, in all those proud cold faces,
 One thought of sympathy.

NOTHING BUT STONES

23

I watched them bowing and devoutly kneeling,
Heard their responses like sweet waters roll.
But only the glorious organ's sacred pealing
Seemed gushing from a full and fervent soul.
I listened to the man of holy calling,
He spoke of creeds, and hailed his own as best ;
Of man's corruption and of Adam's falling,
But naught that gave me rest :

Nothing that helped me bear the daily grinding
Of soul with body, heart with heated brain ;
Nothing to show the purpose of this blinding
And sometimes overwhelming sense of pain.
And then, dear friend, I thought of thee, so lowly,
So unassuming, and so gently kind,
And lo ! a peace, a calm serene and holy,
Settled upon my mind.

Ah, friend, my friend ! one true heart, fond and tender,
That understands our troubles and our needs,
Brings us more near to God than all the splendour
And pomp of seeming worship and vain creeds.
One glance of thy dear eyes so full of feeling,
Doth bring me closer to the Infinite
Than all that throng of worldly people kneeling
In blaze of gorgeous light.

INEVITABLE

TO-DAY I was so weary and I lay
In that delicious state of semi-waking,
When baby, sitting with his nurse at play,
Cried loud for 'mamma,' all his toys forsaking.

I was so weary and I needed rest,
And signed to nurse to bear him from the room.
Then, sudden, rose and caught him to my breast,
And kissed the grieving mouth and cheeks of bloom.

For swift as lightning came the thought to me,
With pulsing heart-throes and a mist of tears,
Of days inevitable, that are to be,
If my fair darling grows to manhood's years ;

Days when he will not call for 'mamma,' when
The world, with many a pleasure and bright joy,
Shall tempt him forth into the haunts of men
And I shall lose the first place with my boy ;

When other homes and loves shall give delight,
When younger smiles and voices will seem best.
And so I held him to my heart to-night,
Forgetting all my need of peace and rest.

THE OCEAN OF SONG

IN a land beyond sight or conceiving,
In a land where no blight is, no wrong,
No darkness, no graves, and no grieving,
There lies the great ocean of song.
And its waves, oh, its waves unbeholden
By any save gods, and their kind,
Are not blue, are not green, but are golden,
Like moonlight and sunlight combined.

It was whispered to me that their waters
Were made from the gathered-up tears
That were wept by the sons and the daughters
Of long-vanished eras and spheres.
Like white sands of heaven the spray is
That falls all the happy day long,
And whoever it touches straightway is
Made glad with the spirit of song.

Up, up to the clouds where their hoary
Crowned heads melt away in the skies,
The beautiful mountains of glory
Each side of the song-ocean rise.
Here day is one splendour of sky-light—
Of God's light with beauty replete.
Here night is not night, but is twilight,
Pervading, enfolding, and sweet.

Bright birds from all climes and all regions,
That sing the whole glad summer long,
Are dumb, till they flock here in legions
And lave in the ocean of song.
It is here that the four winds of heaven,
The winds that do sing and rejoice,
It is here they first came and were given
The secret of sound and a voice.

Far down along beautiful beaches,
By night and by glorious day,
The throng of the gifted ones reaches,
Their foreheads made white with the spray,
And a few of the sons and the daughters
Of this kingdom, cloud-hidden from sight,
Go down in the wonderful waters,
And bathe in those billows of light.

And their souls evermore are like fountains,
And liquid and lucent and strong,
High over the tops of the mountains
Gush up the sweet billows of song.
No drouth-time of waters can dry them.
Whoever has bathed in that sea,
All dangers, all deaths, they defy them,
And are gladder than gods are, with glee.

'IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN'

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'IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN'

WE will be what we could be. Do not say,
'It might have been, had not or that, or this.'
No fate can keep us from the chosen way ;
He only might, who *is*.

We will do what we could do. Do not dream
Chance leaves a hero, all uncrowned to grieve.
I hold, all men are greatly what they seem ;
He does, who could achieve.

We will climb where we could climb. Tell me not
Of adverse storms that kept thee from the height.
What eagle ever missed the peak he sought ?
He always climbs who might.

I do not like the phrase, 'It might have been!'
It lacks all force, and life's best truths perverts :
For I believe we have, and reach, and win,
Whatever our deserts.

MOMUS, GOD OF LAUGHTER

THOUGH with gods the world is
cumbered,
Gods unnamed, and gods unnumbered,
Never god was known to be
Who had not his devotee.
So I dedicate to mine,
Here in verse, my temple-shrine.

'Tis not Ares,—mighty Mars,
Who can give success in wars.
'Tis not Morpheus, who doth keep
Guard above us while we sleep,
'Tis not Venus, she whose duty
'Tis to give us love and beauty ;
Hail to these, and others, after
Momus, gleesome god of laughter.

Quirinus would guard my health,
Plutus would insure me wealth ;
Mercury looks after trade,
Hera smiles on youth and maid.
All are kind, I own their worth,
After Momus, god of mirth.
Though Apollo, out of spite,
Hides away his face of light,

MOMUS, GOD OF LAUGHTER 243

Though Minerva looks askance,
Deigning me no smiling glance,
Kings and queens may envy me
While I claim the god of glee.

Wisdom wearies, Love has wings—
Wealth makes burdens, Pleasure stings,
Glory proves a thorny crown—
So all gifts the gods throw down
Bring their pains and troubles after;
All save Momus, god of laughter.
He alone gives constant joy.
Hail to Momus, happy boy!

I DREAM

O H, I have dreams. I sometimes dream of Life
In the full meaning of that splendid word.
Its subtle music which few men have heard,
Though all may hear it, sounding through earth's strife
Its mountain heights by mystic breezes kissed
Lifting their lovely peaks above the dust;
Its treasures which no touch of time can rust,
Its emerald seas, its dawns of amethyst,
Its certain purpose, its serene repose,
Its usefulness, that finds no hour for woes.
This is my dream of Life.

Yes, I have dreams. I oftentimes dream of Love
As radiant and brilliant as a star.
As changeless, too, as that fixed light afar
Which glorifies vast worlds of space above.
Strong as the tempest when it holds its breath,
Before it bursts in fury ; and as deep
As the unfathomed seas, where lost worlds sleep,
And sad as birth, and beautiful as death.
As fervent as the fondest soul could crave,
Yet holy as the moonlight on a grave.
This is my dream of Love.

Yes, yes, I dream. One oft-recurring dream
Is beautiful and comforting and blest,
Complete with certain promises of rest,
Divine content, and ecstasy supreme.
When that strange essence, author of all faith,
That subtle something, which cries for the light,
Like a lost child who wanders in the night,
Shall solve the mighty mystery of Death,
Shall find eternal progress, or sublime
And satisfying slumber for all time.
This is my dream of Death.

THE SONNET

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THE SONNET

ALONE it stands in Poesy's fair land,
A temple by the muses set apart;
A perfect structure of consummate art,
By artists builded and by genius planned,
Beyond the reach of the apprentice hand,
Beyond the ken of the untutored hearer,
Like a fine carving in a common mart,
Only the favoured few will understand.
A *chef-d'œuvre* toiled over with great care,
Yet which the unseeing careless crowd goes by,
A plainly set, but well-cut solitaire,
An ancient bit of pottery, too rare
To please or hold aught save the special eye,
These only with the sonnet can compare.

THE PAST

IFLING my past behind me, like a robe
Worn threadbare in the seams, and out of date.
I have outgrown it. Wherefore should I weep
And dwell upon its beauty, and its dyes
Of Oriental splendour, or complain
That I must needs discard it? I can weave

Upon the shuttles of the future years
A fabric far more durable. Subdued,
It may be, in the blending of its hues,
Where sombre shades commingle, yet the gleam
Of golden warp shall shoot it through and through,
While over all a fadeless lustre lies,
And starred with gems made out of crystallised tears,
My new robe shall be richer than the old.

A DREAM

THAT was a curious dream ; I thought the three
Great planets that are drawing near the sun
With such unerring certainty, begun
To talk together in a mighty glee.
They spoke of vast convulsions which would be
Throughout the solar system—the rare fun
Of watching haughty stars drop, one by one,
And vanish in a seething vapour sea.

I thought I heard them comment on the earth—
That small dark object—doomed beyond a doubt.
They wondered if live creatures moved about
Its tiny surface, deeming it of worth.
And then they laughed—'twas such a singing shout
That I awoke and joined too in their mirth.

USELESSNESS

LET mine not be that saddest fate of all
To live beyond my greater self ; to see
My faculties decaying, as the tree
Stands stark and helpless while its green leaves fall.
Let me hear rather the imperious call,
Which all men dread, in my glad morning time,
And follow death ere I have reached my prime,
Or drunk the strengthening cordial of life's gall.
The lightning's stroke or the fierce tempest blast
Which fells the green tree to the earth to-day
Is kinder than the calm that lets it last,
Unhappy witness of its own decay.
May no man ever look on me and say,
'She lives, but all her usefulness is past.'

WILL

THERE is no chance, no destiny, no fate,
Can circumvent or hinder or control
The firm resolve of a determined soul.
Gifts count for nothing ; will alone is great ;
All things give way before it, soon or late.
What obstacle can stay the mighty force
Of the sea-seeking river in its course,
Or cause the ascending orb of day to wait ?

WINTER RAIN

Each well-born soul must win what it deserves.
Let the fool prate of luck. The fortunate
Is he whose earnest purpose never swerves,
Whose slightest action or inaction serves
The one great aim.

Why, even Death stands still,
And waits an hour sometimes for such a will.

WINTER RAIN

FALLING upon the frozen world last night,
I heard the slow beat of the Winter rain—
Poor foolish drops, down dripping all in vain;
The ice-bound Earth but mocked their puny might,
Far better had the fixedness of white
And uncomplaining snows—which make no sign,
But coldly smile, when pitying moonbeams shine—
Concealed its sorrow from all human sight.
Long, long ago, in blurred and burdened years,
I learned the uselessness of uttered woe.
Though sinewy Fate deals her most skilful blow,
I do not waste the gall now of my tears,
But feed my pride upon its bitter, while
I look straight in the world's bold eyes, and smile.

LIFE

LIFE, like a romping schoolboy, full of glee,
 Doth bear us on his shoulders for a time.
 There is no path too steep for him to climb.
 With strong, lithe limbs, as agile and as free,
 As some young roe, he speeds by vale and sea,
 By flowery mead, by mountain peak sublime,
 And all the world seems motion set to rhyme,
 Till, tired out, he cries, 'Now carry me !'
 In vain we murmur ; 'Come,' Life says, 'Fair play !'
 And seizes on us. God ! he goads us so !
 He does not let us sit down all the day.
 At each new step we feel the burden grow,
 Till our bent backs seem breaking as we go,
 Watching for Death to meet us on the way.

BURDENED

'Genius, a man's weapon, a woman's burden.'—LAMARTINE.

DEAR God ! there is no sadder fate in life
 Than to be burdened so that you can not
 Sit down contented with the common lot
 Of happy mother and devoted wife.
 To feel your brain wild and your bosom rife
 With all the sea's commotion ; to be fraught
 With fires and frenzies which you have not sought,
 And weighed down with the wild world's weary strife ;

LET THEM GO

To feel a fever always in your breast ;
To lean and hear, half in affright, half shame,
A loud-voiced public boldly mouth your name ;
To reap your hard-sown harvest in unrest,
And know, however great your meed of fame,
You are but a weak woman at the best.

LET THEM GO

LET the dream go. Are there not other dreams
In vastness of clouds hid from thy sight
That yet shall gild with beautiful gold gleams,
And shoot the shadows through and through with light ?
What matters one lost vision of the night ?
Let the dream go !

Let the hope set. Are there not other hopes
That yet shall rise like new stars in thy sky ?
Not long a soul in sullen darkness gropes
Before some light is lent it from on high ;
What folly to think happiness gone by !
Let the hope set !

Let the joy fade. Are there not other joys,
Like frost-bound bulbs, that yet shall start and bloom ?
Severe must be the winter that destroys
The hardy roots locked in their silent tomb.
What cares the earth for her brief time of gloom ?
Let the joy fade !

FIVE KISSES

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Let the love die. Are there not other loves
As beautiful and full of sweet unrest,
Flying through space like snowy-pinioned doves?
They yet shall come and nestle in thy breast,
And thou shalt say of each, 'Lo, this is best!
Let the love die!

FIVE KISSES

THE MOTHER'S KISS

I

LOVE breathed a secret to her listening heart,
And said 'Be silent.' Though she guarded it,
And dwelt as one within a world apart,
Yet sun and star seemed by that secret lit.
And where she passed, each whispering wind ablow.
And every little blossom in the sod,
Called joyously to her, 'We know, we know
For are we not the intimates of God?'
Life grew so radiant, and so opulent,
That when her fragile body and her brain
By mortal throes of agony were rent,
She felt a curious rapture in her pain.
Then, after anguish, came the supreme bliss—
They brought the little baby, for her kiss!

THE BETROTHAL

II

There was a little pause between the dances ;
Without, somewhere, a tinkling fountain played.
The dusky path was lit by ardent glances
As forth they fared, a lover and a maid.
He chose a nook, from curious eyes well hidden—
All redolent with sweet midsummer charm,
And by the great primeval instinct bidden,
He drew her in the shelter of his arm.
The words that long deep in his heart had trembled
Found sudden utterance ; she at first dissembled,
Refused her lips, and half withdrew her hand,
Then murmured ' Yes,' and yielded, woman fashion,
Her virgin mouth to young love's kiss of passion.

THE BRIDAL KISS

III

As fleecy clouds trail back across the skies,
Showing the sweet young moon in azure space,
The lifted veil revealed her shining face—
A sudden wonder to his eager eyes.
In that familiar beauty lurked surprise :
For now the wife stood in the maiden's place—
With conscious dignity, and woman's grace,
And love's large pride grown trebly fair and wise.

The world receded, leaving them alone.

The universe was theirs, from sphere to sphere,
And life assumed new meaning, and new worth.
Love held no privilege they did not own,

And when they kissed each other without fear,
They understood why God had made the earth.

DOMESTIC BLISS

IV

Sequestered in their calm domestic bower,

They sat together. He in manhood's prime
And she a matron in her fullest flower.

The mantel clock gave forth a warning chime.

She put her work aside ; his bright cigar

Grew pale, and crumbled in an ashen heap.

The lights went out, save one remaining star

That watched beside the children in their sleep.

She hummed a little song and nestled near,

As side by side they went to their repose.

His arm about her waist, he whispered ' Dear,'

And pressed his lips upon her mouth's full rose—

The sacred sweetness of their wedded life

Breathed in that kiss of husband and of wife.

OLD AGE.

V

The young see heaven—but to the old who wait
 The final call, the hills of youth arise
 More beautiful than shores of Paradise.
 Beside a glowing and voracious grate
 A dozing couple dream of yesterday ;
 The islands of a vanished past appear,
 Bringing forgotten names and faces near ;
 While lost in mist, the present fades away.
 The fragrant winds of tender memories blow
 Across the gardens of the ' Used-to-be !'
 They smile into each other's eyes, and see,
 The bride and bridegroom of the long ago.
 And tremulous lips, pressed close to faded cheek,
 Love's silent tale of deathless passion speak.

RETROSPECTION

I LOOK down the lengthening distance
 Far back to youth's valley of hope.
 How strange seemed the ways of existence,
 How infinite life and its scope !
 What dreams, what ambitions came thronging
 To people a world of my own !
 How the heart in my bosom was longing,
 For pleasures and places unknown.

But the hill-tops of pleasure and beauty
Were covered with mist at the dawn ;
And only the rugged road Duty
Shone clear, as my feet wandered on.

I loved not the path and its leading
I hated the rocks and the dust ;
But a Voice from the Silence was leading,
It spoke but one syllable—' Trust.'

I saw, as the morning grew older,
The fair flowered hills of delight ;
And the feet of my comrades grew bolder,
They hurried away from my sight.

And when on the pathway I faltered,
And when I rebelled at my fate,
The Voice with assurance unaltered,
Again spoke one syllable—' Wait.'

Along the hard highway I travelled
And saw, with dim vision, how soon
The morning's gold locks were unravelled,
By fingers of amorous noon.

A turn in the pathway of duty—
I stood in the perfect day's prime,
Close, close to the hillside of beauty
The Voice from the Silence said ' Climb.'

The road to the beautiful Regions
Lies ever through Duty's hard way.
Oh ye who go searching in legions,
Know this and be patient to-day.

HELENA

LAST night I saw Helena. She whose praise
Of late all men have sounded. She for whom
Young Angus rashly sought a silent tomb
Rather than live without her all his days.

Wise men go mad who look upon her long,
She is so ripe with dangers. Yet meanwhile
I find no fascination in her smile,
Although I make her theme of this poor song.

'Her golden tresses?' yes, they may be fair,
And yet to me each shining silken tress
Seems robbed of beauty and all lustreless—
Too many hands have stroked Helena's hair.

(I know a little maiden so demure
She will not let her one true lover's hands
In playful fondness touch her soft brown bands,
So dainty-minded is she, and so pure.)

'Her great dark eyes that flash like gems at night?
Large, long-lashed eyes and lustrous?' that may be,
And yet they are not beautiful to me.
Too many hearts have sunned in their delight.

(I mind me of two tender blue eyes, hid
So underneath white curtains, and so veiled
That I have sometimes plead for hours, and failed
To see more than the shyly lifted lid.)

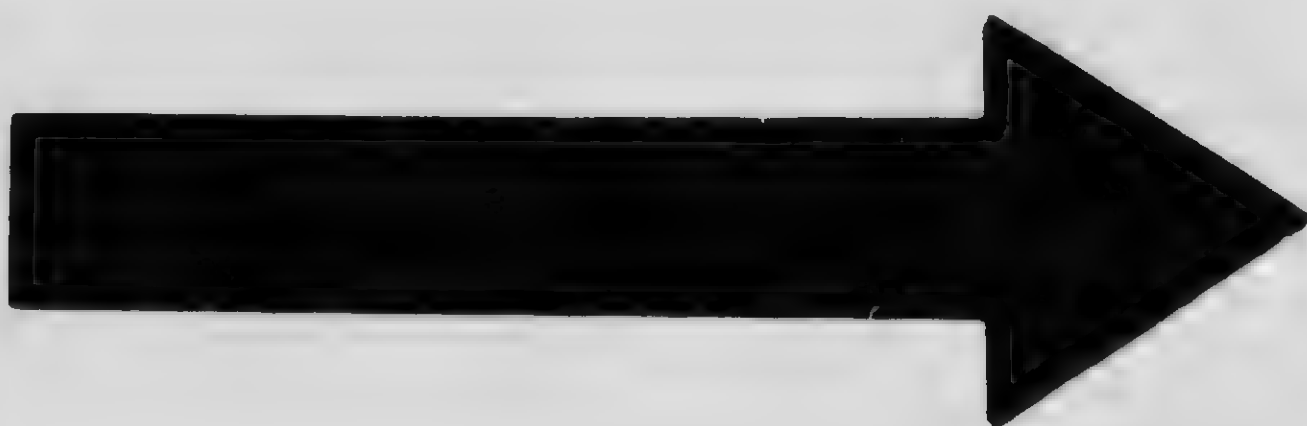
'Her perfect mouth so like a carved kiss ?
'Her honeyed-mouth, where hearts do, fly-like, drown ?
I would not taste its sweetness for a crown ;
Too many lips have drank its nectared bliss.

(I know a mouth whose virgin dew, undried,
Lies like a young grape's bloom, untouched and sweet,
And though I plead in passion at her feet,
She would not let me brush it if I died.)

In vain, Helena ! though wise men may vie
For thy rare smile, or die from loss of it,
Armoured by my sweet lady's trust, I sit.
And know thou are not worth her faintest sigh.

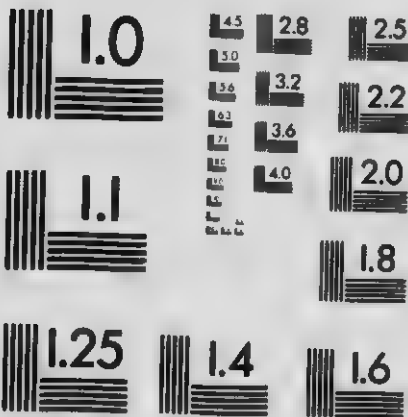
NOTHING REMAINS

NOTHING remains of unrecorded ages
That lie in the silent cemetery of time ;
Their wisdom may have shamed our wisest sages,
Their glory may have been indeed sublime.
How weak do seem our strivings after power,
How poor the grandest efforts of our brains,
If out of all we are, in one short hour
Nothing remains.



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NOTHING REMAINS

Nothing remains but the Eternal Spaces,
Time and decay uproot the forest trees.
Even the mighty mountains leave their places,
And sink their haughty heads beneath strange seas,
The great earth writhes in some convulsive spasms
And turns the proudest cities into plains.
The level sea becomes a yawning chasm—
Nothing remains.

Nothing remains but the Eternal Forces,
The sad seas cease complaining and grow dry,
Rivers are drained and altered in their courses,
Great stars pass out and vanish from the sky.
Ideas die and old religions perish,
Our rarest pleasures and our keenest pains
Are swept away with all we hate or cherish—
Nothing remains.

Nothing remains but the Eternal Nameless
And all-creative spirit of the Law,
Uncomprehended, comprehensive, blameless,
Invincible, resistless, with no flaw ;
So full of love it must create for ever,
Destroying that it may create again,
Persistent and perfecting in endeavour,
It yet must bring forth angels, after men—
This, this remains !

COMRADES

I AND my Soul are alone to-day,
All in the shining weather ;
We were sick of the world, and we put it away,
So we could rejoice together.

Our host, the Sun, in the blue, blue sky
Is mixing a rare, sweet wine,
In the burnished gold of this cup on high,
For me, and this Soul of mine.

We find it a safe and royal drink,
And a cure for every pain ;
It helps us to love, and helps us to think,
And strengthens body and brain.

And sitting here, with my Soul alone,
Where the yellow sun-rays fall,
Of all the friends I have ever known
I find it the *best* of all.

We rarely meet when the world is near,
For the World hath a pleasing art
And brings me so much that is bright and dear
That my Soul it keepeth apart.

But when I grow weary of mirth and glee,
Of glitter, glow, and splendour,
Like a tried old friend it comes to me,
With a smile that is sad and tender.

WHAT GAIN ?

And we walk together as two friends may.
 And laugh and drink God's wine.
 Oh, a royal comrade any day
 I find this Soul of mine.

WHAT GAIN ?

NOW, while thy rounded cheek is fresh and fair,
 While beauty lingers, laughing, in thine eyes,
 Ere thy young heart shall meet the stranger, 'Care,'
 Or thy blithe soul become the home of sighs,
 Were it not kindness should I give thee rest
 By plunging this sharp dagger in thy breast ?
 Dying so young, with all thy wealth of youth,
 What part of life wouldst thou not claim, in sooth ?
 Only the woe,
 Sweetheart, that sad souls know.

Now, in this sacred hour of supreme trust,
 Of pure delight and palpitating joy,
 Ere change can come, as come it surely must,
 With jarring doubts and discords, to destroy
 Our far too perfect peace, I pray thee, Sweet,
 Were it not best for both of us, and meet,
 If I should bring swift death to seal our bliss ?
 Dying so full of joy, what could we miss ?
 Nothing but tears,
 Sweetheart, and weary years.

TO THE WEST

261

How slight the action ! just one well-aimed blow
Here, where I feel thy warm heart's pulsing beat,
And then another through my own, and so
Our perfect union would be made complete :
So, past all jarring, I should claim thee mine.
Dead with our youth, and faith, and love divine,
Should we not keep the best of life that way ?
What shall we gain by living day on day ?
What shall we gain,
Sweetheart, but bitter pain ?

TO THE WEST

[In an interview with Lawrence Barrett, he said : 'The literature of the New World must look to the West for its poetry.']

NOT to the crowded East,
Where, in a well-worn groove,
Like the harnessed wheel of a great machine,
The trammelled mind must move—
Where Thought must follow the fashion of Thought,
Or be counted vulgar and set at naught.
Not to the languid South,
Where the mariners of the brain
Are lured by the Sirens of the Sense,
And wrecked upon its main—
Where Thought is rocked, on the sweet wind's breath
To a torpid sleep that ends in death.

TO THE WEST

But to the mighty West
That chosen realm of God,
Where Nature reaches her hands to men,
And Freedom walks abroad—
Where mind is King, and fashion is naught,
There shall the New World look for thought.

To the West, the beautiful West,
She shall look, and not in vain—
For out of its broad and boundless store
Come muscle, and nerve, and brain.
Let the bards of the East and the South be dumb—
For out of the West shall the Poets come.

They shall come with souls as great
As the cradle where they were rocked ;
They shall come with brows that are touched with fire
Like the gods with whom they have walked ;
They shall come from the West in royal state,
The Singers and Thinkers for whom we wait.

THE LAND OF CONTENT

I SET out for the Land of Content,
By the gay crowded pleasure-highway,
With laughter, and jesting, I went
With the mirth-loving throng for a day ;
Then I knew I had wandered astray,

THE LAND OF CONTENT

263

For I met returned pilgrims, belated,
Who said, 'We are weary and sated,
But we found not the Land of Content.'

I turned to the steep path of fame,
I said, 'It is over yon height—
This land with the beautiful name—
Ambition will lend me its light.'

But I paused in my journey ere night,
For the way grew so lonely and troubled;
I said—my anxiety doubled—
'This is not the road to Content.'

Then I joined the great rabble and throng
That frequents the moneyed world's mart;
But the greed, and the grasping and wrong,
Left me only one wish—to depart.
And sickened, and saddened at heart,
I hurried away from the gateway,
For my soul and my spirit said straightway,
'This is not the road to Content.'

Then weary in body and brain,
An overgrown path I detected,
And I said 'I will hide with my pain
In this byway, unused and neglected.'
Lo! it led to the realm God selected
To crown with His best gifts of beauty,
And through the dark pathway of duty
I came to the land of Content.

WARNING

HIGH in the heavens I saw the moon this morning,
Albeit the sun shone bright ;
Unto my soul it spoke, in voice of warning,
‘Remember Night!’

AFTER THE BATTLES ARE OVER

[Read at Reunion of the G. A. T., Madison, Wis., July 4,
1872.]

AFTER the battles are over,
And the war drums cease to beat,
And no more is heard on the hillside
The sound of hurrying feet,
Full many a noble action,
That was done in the days of strife
By the soldier is half forgotten,
In the peaceful walks of life.

Just as the tangled grasses,
In Summer’s warmth and light,
Grow over the graves of the fallen
And hide them away from sight,
So many an act of valour,
And many a deed sublime,
Fade from the mind of the soldier
O’ergrown by the grass of time.

AFTER THE BATTLES ARE OVER 265

Not so should they be rewarded,
Those noble deeds of old !
They should live for ever and ever,
When the heroes' hearts are cold.
Then rally, ye brave old comrades,
Old veterans, reunite !
Uproot Time's tangled grasses—
Live over the march, and the fight.

Let Grant come up from the White House,
And clasp each brother's hand,
First chieftain of the army,
Last chieftain of the land.
Let him rest from a nation's burdens,
And go, in thought, with his men,
Through the fire and smoke of Shiloh,
And save the day again.

This silent hero of battles
Knew no such word as defeat.
It was left for the rebels' learning,
Along with the word—retreat.
He was not given to talking,
But he found that guns would preach
In a way that was more convincing
Than fine and flowery speech.

266 AFTER THE BATTLES ARE OVER

Three cheers for the grave commander
Of the grand old Tennessee !
Who won the first great battle—
Gained the first great victory.
His motto was always 'Conquer,'
'Success' was his countersign,
And 'though it took all Summer,'
He kept fighting upon 'that line.'

Let Sherman, the stern old General,
Come rallying with his men ;
Let them march once more through Georgia
And down to the sea again.
Oh ! that grand old tramp to Savannah,
Three hundred miles to the coast,
It will live in the heart of the nation,
For ever its pride and boast.

As Sheridan went to the battle,
When a score of miles away,
He has come to the feast and banquet,
By the iron horse to-day.
Its pace is not much swifter
Than the pace of that famous steed
Which bore him down to the contest
And saved the day by his speed.

AFTER THE BATTLES ARE OVER 267

Then go over the ground to-day, boys,
Tread each remembered spot.
It will be a gleesome journey,
On the swift-shod feet of thought ;
You can fight a bloodless battle,
You can skirmish along the route,
But it's not worth while to forage,
There are rations enough without.

Don't start if you hear the cannon,
It is not the sound of doom,
It does not call to the contest—
To the battle's smoke and gloom.
'Let us have peace,' was spoken,
And lo ! peace ruled again ;
And now the nation is shouting,
Through the cannon's voice, 'Amen.'

O boys who besieged old Vicksburgh,
When time e'er wash away
The triumph of her surrender,
Nine years ago to-day ?
Can you ever forget the moment,
When you saw the flag of white,
How the grim old city
Fell in her might ?

268 AFTER THE BATTLES ARE OVER

Ah, 'twas a bold, brave army,
When the boys, with a right good will,
Went gaily marching and singing
To the fight at Champion Hill.
They met with a warm reception,
But the soul of 'Old John Brown
Was abroad on that field of battle
And our flag did not go down.

Come, heroes of Look Out Mountain,
Of Corinth and Donelson,
Of Kenesaw and Atlanta,
And tell how the day was won !
Tuck ! bow the head for a moment—
There are those who cannot come,
No bugle-call can arouse them—
No sound o' 'fife or drum.

Oh, boys who died for the country,
Oh, dear and sainted dead !
What can we say about you
That has not once been said ?
Whether you fell in the contest,
Struck down by shot and shell,
Or pined 'neath the hand of sickness
Or starved in the prison cell,

AFTER THE BATTLES ARE O. E. R. 269

We know that you died for Freedom,
To save our land from shame,
To rescue a perilled Nation,
And we give you deathless fame.
'Twas the cause of Truth and Justice
That you fought and perished for,
And we say it, oh, so gently,
'Our boys who died in the war.'

Saviours of our Republic,
Heroes who wore the blue,
We owe the peace that surrounds us—
And our Nation's strength to you
We owe it to you that our banner,
The fairest flag in the world,
Is to-day unstained, unsullied,
On the Summer air unfurled.

We look on its stripes and spangles,
And our hearts are filled the while
With love for the brave commanders,
And the boys of the rank and file.
The grandest deeds of valour
Were never written out,
The noblest acts of virtue
The world knows nothing about.

270 AFTER THE BATTLES ARE OVER

And many a private soldier,
Who walks his humble way,
With no sounding name or title,
Unknown to the world to-day,
In the eyes of God is a hero
As worthy of the bays
As any mighty General
To whom the world gives praise.

Brave men of a mighty army,
We extend you friendship's hand
I speak for the 'Loyal Women,'
Those pillars of our land.
We wish you a hearty welcome,
We are proud that you gather here
To talk of old times together
On this brightest day in the year.

And if Peace, whose snow-white pinions
Brood over our land to-day,
Should ever again go from us,
(God grant she may ever stay!)
Should our Nation call in her peril
For 'Six hundred thousand more,'
The loyal women would hear her,
And send you out as before.

AND THEY ARE DUMB

271

We would bring out the treasured knapsack,
We would take the sword from the wall,
And hushing our own hearts' pleadings,
Hear only the country's call.
For next to our God is our Nation ;
And we cherish the honoured name
Of the bravest of all brave armies
Who fought for that Nation's fame.

AND THEY ARE DUMB

I HAVE been across the bridges of the years,
Wet with tears
Were the ties on which I trod, going back
Down the track
To the valley where I left, 'neath skies of Truth,
My lost youth.

As I went, I dropped my burdens, one and all—
Let them fall ;
All my sorrows, all my wrinkles, all my care.
My white hair
I laid down, like some lone pilgrim's heavy pack,
By the track

AND THEY ARE DUMB

As I neared the happy valley with light feet,
My heart beat
To the rhythm of a song I used to know
Long ago,
And my spirit gushed and bubbled like a fountain
Down a mountain.

On the border of that valley I found you,
Tried and true ;
And we wandered through the golden Summer-Land
Hand in hand.
And my pulses beat with rapture in the blisses
Of your kisses.

And we met there, in those green and verdant places,
Smiling faces,
And sweet laughter echoed upward from the dells
Like gold bells.
And the world was spilling over with the glory
Of Youth's story.

It was but a dreamer's journey of the brain ;
And again
I have left the happy valley far behind ;
And I find
Time stands waiting with his burdens in a pack
For my back.

NIGHT

273

As he speeds me, like a rough, well-meaning friend,
To the end,
Will I find again the lost ones loved so well?
Who can tell!
But the dead know what the life will be to come—
And they are dumb!

NIGHT

AS some dusk mother shields from all alarms
The tired child she gathers to her breast,
The brunette Night doth fold me in her arms,
And hushes me to perfect peace and rest.
Her eyes of stars shine on me, and I hear
Her voice of winds low crooning on my ear.
O Night, O Night, how beautiful thou art!
Come, fold me closer to thy pulsing heart.

The day is full of gladness, and the light
So beautifies the common outer things,
I only see with my external sight,
And only hear the great world's voice which rings.
But silently from daylight and from din
The sweet Night draws me—whispers, 'Look within!'
And looking, as one wakened from a dream,
I see what *is*—no longer what doth seem.

The Night says, 'Listen!' and upon my ear
 Revealed, as are the visions to my sight,
 The voices known as 'Beautiful' come near
 And whisper of the vastly Infinite.
 Great, blue-eyed Truth, her sister Purity,
 Their brother Honour, all converse with me,
 And kiss my brow, and say, 'Be brave of heart!
 O holy three! how beautiful thou art!

The Night says, 'Child, sleep that thou mayst arise
 Strong for to-morrow's struggle.' And I feel
 Her shadowy fingers pressing on my eyes:
 Like thistledown I float to the Ideal—
 The Slumberland, made beautiful and bright
 As death, by dreams of loved ones gone from sight,
 O food for souls, sweet dreams of pure delight,
 How beautiful the holy hours of Night!

ALL FOR ME

THE world grows green on a thousand hills—
 By a thousand willows the bees are humming,
 And a million birds by a million rills,
 Sing of the golden season coming.
 But, gazing out on the sun-kist lea,
 And hearing a thrush and a blue-bird sit,
 I feel that the summer is all for me,
 And all for me are the joys it is bringing.

All for me the bumble-bee
Drones his song in the perfect weather ;
And, just on purpose to sing to me,
Thrush and blue-bird came North together.
Just for me, in red and white,
Bloom and blossom the fields of clover ;
And all for me and my delight
The wild Wind follows and plays the lover.

The mighty sun, with a scorching kiss
(I have read, and heard, and do not doubt it)
Has burned up a thousand worlds like this,
And never stopped to think about it.
And yet I believe he hurries up
Just on purpose to kiss my flowers—
To drink the dew from the lily-cup,
And help it to grow through golden hours

I know I am only a speck of dust,
An individual mite of masses,
Clinging upon the outer crust
Of a little ball of cooling gases.
And yet, and yet, say what you will,
And laugh, if you please, at my lack of reason,
For me wholly, and for me still,
Blooms and blossoms the Summer season.

Nobody else has ever heard
The story the Wind to me discloses ;
And none but I and the humming-bird
Can read the hearts of the crimson roses.
Ah, my Summer—my love—my own !
The world grows glad in your smiling weather ;
Yet all for me, and me alone,
You and your Court come North together.

INTO SPACE

IF the sad old world should jump a cog
Sometime, in its dizzy spinning,
And go off the track with a sudden jog,
What an end would come to the sinning,
What a rest from strife and the burdens of life
For the millions of people in it,
What a way out of care, and worry and wear,
All in a beautiful minute.

As 'round the sun with a curving sweep
It hurries and runs and races,
Should it lose its balance, and go with a leap
Into the vast sea-spaces,
What a blest relief it would bring to the grief,
And the trouble and toil about us,
To be suddenly hurled from the solar world
And let it go on without us.

INTO SPACE

277

With not a sigh or a sad good-bye
For loved ones left behind us,
We would go with a lunge and a mighty plunge
Where never a grave should find us.
What a wild mad thrill our veins would fill
As the great earth, like a feather,
Should float through the air to God knows where,
And carry us all together.

No dark, damp tomb and no mourner's gloom,
No tolling bell in the steeple,
But in one swift breath a painless death
For a million billion people.
What greater bliss could we ask than this,
To sweep with a bird's free motion
Through leagues of space to a resting-place,
In a vast and vapoury ocean—
To pass away from this life for aye
With never a dear tie sundered,
And a world on fire for a funeral pyre,
While the stars looked on and wondered?

THROUGH DIM EYES

IS it the world, or my eyes, that are sadder?
I see not the grace that I used to see
In the meadow-brook whose song was so glad, or
In the boughs of the willow tree.

THROUGH DIM EYES

The brook runs slower—its song seems lower
And not the song that it sang of old ;
And the tree I admired looks weary and tired
Of the changeless story of heat and cold.

When the sun goes up, and the stars go under,
In that supreme hour of the breaking day,
Is it my eyes, or the dawn, I wonder,
That finds less of the gold, and more of the gray
I see nor the splendour, the tints so tender,
The rose hued glory I used to see ;
And I often borrow a vague half-sorrow
That another morning has dawned for me.

When the royal smile of that welcome comer
Beams on the meadow and burns in the sky,
Is it my eyes, or does the Summer
Bring less of bloom than in days gone by ?
The beauty that thrilled me, the rapture that
filled me,
To an overflowing of happy tears,
I pass unseeing, my sad eyes being
Dimmed by the shadow of vanished years.

When the heart grows weary, all things seem dreary ;
When the burden grows heavy, the way seems long.
Thank God for sending kind death as an ending,
Like a grand Amen to a minor song.

THE PUNISHED

279

THE PUNISHED

NOT they who know the awful gibbet's anguish,
Not they who, while sad years go by them, in
The sunless cells of lonely prisons languish,
Do suffer fullest penalty for sin.

'Tis they who walk the highways unsuspected,
Yet with grim fear for ever at their side,
Who hug the corpse of some sin undetected,
A corpse no grave or coffin-lid can hide—

'Tis they who are in their own chambers haunted
By thoughts that like unbidden guests intrude,
And sit down, uninvited and unwanted,
And make a nightmare of the solitude.

HALF FLEDGED

I FEEL the stirrings in me of great things.
New half-fledged thoughts rise up and beat their
wings,

And tremble on the margin of their nest.
Then flutter back, and hide within my breast.

Beholding space, they doubt their untried strength
Beholding men, they fear them. But at length,
Grown all too great and active for the heart
That broods them with such tender mother art,

HALF FLEDGED

Forgetting fear, and men, and all, that hour,
Save the impelling consciousness of power
That stirs within them—they shall soar away
Up to the very portals of the Day.

Oh, what exultant rapture thrills me through
When I contemplate all those thoughts may do ;
Like snow-white eagles penetrating space,
They may explore full many an unknown place,
And build their nests on mountain heights unseen,
Whereon doth lie that dreamed-of rest serene.
Stay thou a little longer in my breast,
Till my fond heart shall push thee from the nest
Anxious to see thee soar to heights divine—
Oh, beautiful but half-fledged thoughts of mine.

THE YEAR

WHAT can be said in New Year rhymes,
That's not been said a thousand times ?

The new years come, the old years go,
We know we dream, we dream we know.

We rise up laughing with the light,
We lie down weeping with the night.

We hug the world until it stings,
We curse it then and sigh for wings.

THE UNATTAINED

281

We live, we love, we woo, we wed,
We wreath our brides, we sheet our dead.
We laugh, we weep, we hope, we fear,
And that's the burden of the year

THE UNATTAINED

A VISION beauteous as the morn,
With heaven's eyes and tresses streaming,
Slow glided o'er a field late shorn
Where walked a poet idly dreaming.
He saw her, and joy lit his face,
'Oh, vanish not at human spearing.'
He cried, 'thou form of man's ideal,
Thou art the poem I am seeking.
'I've sought thee long! I found thee now—
My thought embodied, I am glad.'
She shook the tresses from her brow.
'Nay, nay!' she said, 'I am ideal,
I am the phantom of desire,
The spirit of all great endeavours,
I am the voice that says, "Come higher,"
That calls men up and up for ever.
'Tis not alone thy thought supreme
That here upon thy path has risen;
I am the artist's highest dream,
The ray of light he cannot prison.

I am the sweet ecstatic note
 Than all glad music gladder, clearer,
 That trembles in the singer's throat,
 And dies without a human hearer.

'I am the greater, better yield,
 That leads and cheers thy farmer neighbour,
 For me he bravely tills the field
 And whistles gaily at his labour.
 Not thou alone, O poet soul,
 Dost seek me through an endless morrow,
 But to the teiling, hoping whole
 I am at once the hope and sorrow.

'The spirit of the unattained,
 I am to those who seek to name me,
 A good desired but never gained :
 All shall pursue, but none shall claim me.

IN THE CROWD

HOW happy they are, in all seeming,
 How gay, or how smilingly proud,
 How brightly their faces are beaming,
 These people who make up the crowd !
 How they bow, how they bend, how they flutter,
 How they look at each other and smile,
 How they glow, and what *bon mots* they utter !
 But a strange thought has found me the while !

IN THE CROWD

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It is odd, but I stand here and fancy
These people who now play a part,
All forced by some strange necromancy
To speak, and to act, from the heart.
What a hush would come over the laughter !
What a silence would fall on the mirth !
And then what a wail would sweep after,
As the night-wind sweeps over the earth !

If the secrets held under and hidden
In the intricate hearts of the crowd
Were suddenly called to, and bidden
To rise up and cry out aloud,
How strange one would look to another !
Old friends of long standing and years—
Own brothers would not know each other,
Robed new in their sorrows and fears.

From broadcloth, and velvet, and laces,
Would echo the groans of despair,
And there would be blanching of faces
And wringing of hands and of hair.
That man with his record of honour,
That lady down there with the rose,
That girl with Spring's freshness upon her,
Who knoweth the secrets of those ?

LIFE AND I

Smile on, O ye maskers, smile sweetly !
Step lightly, bow low and laugh loud !
Though the world is deceived and completely,
I know ye, O sad-hearted crowd !
I watch you with infinite pity :
But play on, play ever your part,
Be gleeful, be joyful, be witty !
'Tis better than showing the heart.

LIFE AND I

LIFE and I are lovers, straying
Arm in arm along :
Often like two children Maying,
Full of mirth and song.

Life plucks all the blooming hours
Growing by the way ;
Binds them on my brow like flowers,
Calls me Queen of May.

Then again, in rainy weather,
We sit vis-à-vis,
Planning work we'll do together
In the years to be.

Sometimes Life denies me blisses,
And I frown or pout ;
But we make it up with kisses
Ere the day is out.

Woman-like, I sometimes grieve him,
Try his trust and faith,
Saying I shall one day leave him
For his rival, Death.

Then he always grows more zealous,
Tender, and more true ;
Loves the more for being jealous,
As all lovers do.

Though I swear by stars above him,
And by worlds beyond,
That I love him—love him—love him ;
Though my heart is fond ;

Though he gives me, doth my lover,
Kisses with each breath—
I shall one day throw him over,
And plight troth with Death.

GUERDON

UPON the white cheek of the Cherub Year
I saw a tear.
Alas ! I murmured, that the Year should borrow
So soon a sorrow.
Just then the sunlight fell with sudden flame :
The tear became
A wondrous diamond sparkling in the light—
A beauteous sight.

SNOWED UNDER

Upon my soul there fell such woeful loss,
 I said, 'The Cross
 Is grievous for a life as young as mine.'
 Just then, like wine,
 God's sunlight shone from His high Heavens down ;
 And lo ! a crown
 Gleamed in the place of what I thought a burden—
 My sorrow's guerdon.

SNOWED UNDER

OF a thousand things that the year snowed under—
 The busy Old Year who has gone away—
 How many will rise in the Spring, I wonder,
 Brought to life by the sun of May ?
 Will the rose-tree branches, so wholly hidden
 That never a rose-tree seems to be,
 At the sweet Spring's call come forth unbidden,
 And bud in beauty, and bloom for me ?
 Will the fair green Earth, whose throbbing bosom
 Is hid like a maid's in her gown at night,
 'Wake out of her sleep, and with blade and blossom
 Gem her garments to please my sight ?
 Over the knoll in the valley yonder
 The loveliest buttercups bloomed and grew ;
 When the snow has gone that drifted them under,
 Will they shoot up sunward, and bloom anew ?

When wild winds blew, and a sleet-storm pelted,
I lost a jewel of priceless worth ;
If I walk that way when snows have melted,
Will the gem gleam up from the bare brown Earth ?
I laid a love that was dead or dying,
For the year to bury and hide from sight ;
But out of a trance will it waken, crying,
And push to my heart, like a leaf to the light ?

Under the snow lie things so cherished—
Hopes, ambitions, and dreams of men—
Faces that vanished, and trusts that perished,
Never to sparkle and glow again.
The Old Year greedily grasped his plunder,
And covered it over and hurried away :
Of the thousand things that he did, I wonder
How many will rise at the call of May ?
O wise Young Year, with your hands held under
Your mantle of ermine, tell me, pray !

‘LEUDEMANN’S-ON-THE-RIVER’

TOWARD even, when the day leans down
To kiss the upturned face of night,
Out just beyond the loud-voiced town
I know a spot of calm delight.

Like crimson arrows from a quiver
 The red rays pierce the waters flowing,
 While we go dreaming, singing, rowing
 To Leudemann's-on-the-River.

The hills, like some glad mocking-bird,
 Send back our laughter and our singing,
 While faint—and yet more faint is heard
 The steeple bells all sweetly ringing.
 Some message did the winds deliver
 To each glad heart that August night,
 All heard, but all heard not aright,
 By Leudemann's-on-the-River.

Night falls as in some foreign clime,
 Between the hills that slope and rise.
 So dusk the shades at landing-time,
 We could not see each other's eyes.
 We only saw the moonbeams quiver
 Far down upon the stream ! that night
 The new moon gave but little light
 By Leudemann's-on-the-River.

How dusky were those paths that led
 Up from the river to the hall.
 The tall trees branching overhead
 Invite the early shades that fall.

'LEUDEMANN-ON-THE-RIVER' 289

In all the glad blithe world, oh, never
Were hearts more free from care than when
We wandered through those walks, we ten,
By Leudemanns-on-the-River.

So soon, so soon, the changes came,
This August day we two alone,
On that same river, not the same,
Dream of a night for ever flown.
Strange distances have come to sever
The hearts that gaily beat in pleasure,
Long miles we cannot cross or measure—
From Leudemanns-on-the-River.

We'll pluck two leaves, dear friend, to-day.
The green, the russet! seems it strange
So soon, so soon, the leaves can change!
Ah me! so runs all life away.
This night-wind chills me, and I shiver;
The Summer-time is almost past.
One more good-bye—perhaps the last
To Leudemanns-on-the-River.

LITTLE BLUE HOOD

EVERY morning and every night
There passes our window near the street,
A little girl with an eye so bright,
And a cheek so round and a lip so sweet!
The daintiest, jauntiest little miss
That ever any one longed to kiss.

She is neat as wax, and fresh to view,
And her look is wholesome, and clean, and good.
Whatever her gown, her hood is blue,
And so we call her our 'Little Blue Hood,'
For we know not the name of the dear little lass,
But we call to each other to see her pass,

'Little Blue Hood is coming now!'
And we watch from the window while she goes by,
She has such a bonny, smooth, white brow,
And a fearless look in her long-lashed eye!
And a certain dignity wedded to grace
Seems to envelop her form and face

Every morning, in sun or rain,
She walks by the window with sweet, grave air,
And never guesses behind the pane
We two are watching and thinking her fair;
Lovingly watching her down the street,
Dear Little Blue Hood, bright and sweet.

NO SPRING

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Somebody ties that hood of blue
Under the face so fair to see,
Somebody loves her, beside we two,
Somebody kisses her—why can't we ?
Dear Little Blue Hood fresh and fair,
Are you glad we love you, or don't you care ?

NO SPRING

UP from the South come the birds that were
banished,

Frightened away by the presence of frost.
Back to the vale comes the verdure that vanished,
Back to the forest the leaves that were lost.
Over the hillside the carpet of splendour,
Folded through Winter, Spring spreads down again ;
Along the horizon, the tints that were tender,
Lost hues of Summer-time, burn bright as then.

Only the mountains' high summits are hoary,
To the ice-fettered river the sun gives a key.
Once more the gleaming shore lists to the story
Told by an amorous Summer-kissed sea.
All things revive that in Winter-time perished,
The rose buds again in the light o' the sun,
All that was beautiful, all that was cherished,
Sweet things and dear things and all things—save one.

Late, when the year and the roses were lying
 Low with the ruins of Summer and bloom,
 Down in the dust fell a love that was dying,
 And the snow piled over it, and made it a tomb.
 Lo! now the roses are budded for blossom—
 Lo! now the Summer is risen again.
 Why dost thou bud not, O love of my bosom?
 Why dost thou rise not, and thrill me as then?

Life without love is a year without Summer,
 Heart without love is a wood without song.
 Rise then, revive then, thou indolent comer:
 Why dost thou lie in the dark earth so long?
 Rise! ah, thou can'st not! the rose-tree that sheddest
 Its beautiful leaves, in the Spring-time may bloom,
 But of cold things the coldest, of dead things the
 dearest,
 Love buried once, rises not from the tomb.
 Green things may grow on the hillside and heather,
 Birds seek the forest and build there and sing.
 All things revive in the beautiful weather,
 But unto a dead love there cometh no Spring.

MIDSUMMER

AFTER the May time, and after the June time,
 Rare with blossoms and perfumes sweet,
 Cometh the round world's royal noon time,
 The red midsummer of blazing heat.

MIDSUMMER

293

When the sun, like an eye that never closes,
Bends on the earth its servid gaze,
And the winds are still, and the crimson roses
Droop and wither and die in its rays.

Unto my heart has come that season,
O my lady, my worshipped one,
When over the stars of Pride and Reason
Sails Love's cloudless, noonday sun.
Like a great red ball in my bosom burning
With fires that nothing can quench or tame.
It glows till my heart itself seems turning
Into a liquid lake of flame.

The hopes half shy, and the sighs all tender,
The dreams and fears of an earlier day,
Under the noontide's royal splendour,
Droop like roses and wither away.
From the hills of doubt no winds are blowing,
From the isle of pain no breeze is sent.
Only the sun in a white heat glowing
Over an ocean of great content.

Sink, O my soul, in this golden glory,
Die, O my heart, in thy rapture-swoon,
For the Autumn must come with its mournful story,
And Love's midsummer will fade too soon.

A REMINISCENCE

I SAW the wild honey-bee kissing a rose
A wee one, that grows
Down low on the bush, where her sisters above
Cannot see all that's done
As the moments roll on.
Nor hear all the whispers and murmurs of love.

They flaunt out their beautiful leaves in the sun,
And they flirt, every one,
With the wild bees who pass, and the gay butterflies.
And that wee thing in pink—
Why, they never once think
That she's won a lover right under their eyes.

It reminded me, Kate, of a time—you know when !
You were so petite then,
Your dresses were short, and your feet were so small.
Your sisters, Maud-Belle
And Madeline—well,
They *both* set their caps for me, after that ball.

How the blue eyes and black eyes smiled up in my face !
'Twas a neck-and-neck race,
Till that day when you opened the door in the hall,
And looked up and looked down,
With your sweet eyes of brown,
And *you* seemed so tiny, and *I* felt so tall.

A REMINISCENCE

295

Your sisters had sent you to keep me, my dear,
Till they should appear.
Then you were dismissed like a child in disgrace.
How meekly you went !
But your brown eyes, they sent
A thrill to my heart, and a flush to my face.

We always were meeting some way after that.
You hung up my hat,
And got it again, when I finished my call.
Sixteen, and so sweet !
Oh, those cute little feet !
Shall I ever forget how they tripped down the hall ?

Shall I ever forget the first kiss by the door,
Or the vows murmured o'er,
Or the rage and surprise of Maud-Belle ? Well-a-day,
How swiftly time flows,
And who would suppose
That a *bee* could have carried me so far away.

A GIRL'S FAITH

A CROSS the miles that stretch between,
Through days of gloom - glad sunlight,
There shines a face I have not seen
Which yet doth make my world more bright.

He may be near, he may be far,
Or near or far I cannot see,
But faithful as the morning star
He yet shall rise and come to me.

What though fate leads us separate ways,
The world is round, and time is fleet.
A journey of a few brief days,
And face to face we two shall meet.

Shall meet beneath God's arching skies,
While suns shall blaze, or stars shall gleam,
And looking in each other's eyes
Shall hold the past but as a dream.

But round and perfect and complete,
Life like a star shall climb the height,
As we two press with willing feet
Together toward the Infinite.

And still behind the space between,
As back of dawns the sunbeams play,
There shines the face I have not seen,
Whose smile shall wake my world to-day.

TWO

ONE leaned on velvet cushions like a queen—
To see him pass, the hero of an hour,
Whom men call great. She bowed with languid mien,
And smiled, and blushed, and knew her beauty's power.

One trailed her tinselled garments through the street,
And thrust aside the crowd, and found a place
So near, the blooded courser's prancing feet
Cast sparks of fire upon her painted face.

One took the hot-house blossoms from her breast,
And tossed them down, as he went riding by,
And blushed rose-red to see them fondly pressed
To bearded lips, while eye spoke unto eye.

One, bold and hardened with her sinful life,
Yet shrank and shivered painfully, because
His cruel glance cut keener than a knife,
The glance of him who made her what she is

One was observed, and lifted up to fame,
Because the hero smiled upon her ! while
One who was shunned and hated, found her shame
In basking in the death-light of his smile.

SLIPPING AWAY

SLIPPING away—slipping away !
Out of our brief year slips the May ;
And Winter lingers, and Summer flies ;
And Sorrow abideth, and Pleasure dies ;
And the days are short, and the nights are long ;
And little is right, and much is wrong.

SLIPPING AWAY

Slipping away is the Summer time ;
It has lost its rhythm and lilting rhyme—
For the grace goes out of the day so soon,
And the tired head aches in the glare of noon,
And the way seems long to the hills that lie
Under the calm of the western sky.

Slipping away are the friends whose worth
Lent a glow to the sad old earth :
One by one they slip from our sight ;
One by one their graves gleam white ;
Or we count them lost by the crueller death
Of a trust betrayed, or a murdered faith.

Slipping away are the hopes that made
Bliss out of sorrow, and sun out of shade,
Slipping away is our hold on life ;
And out of the struggle and wearing strife,
From joys that diminish, and woes that increase,
We are slipping away to the shores of Peace.

IS IT DONE ?

IT is done! in the fire's fitful flashes,
The last line has withered and curled.
In a tiny white heap of dead ashes
Lie buried the hopes of your world.

There were mad foolish vows in each letter,
It is well they have shrivelled and burned,
And the ring! oh, the ring was a fetter,
It was better removed and returned.

But ah, is it done ? in the embers
Where letters and tokens were cast,
Have you burned up the heart that remembers,
And treasures its beautiful past ?
Do you think in this swift reckless fashion
To ruthlessly burn and destroy
The months that were freighted with passion,
The dreams that were drunken with joy ?

Can you burn up the rapture of kisses
That flashed from the lips to the soul,
Or the heart that grows sick for lost blisses
In spite of its strength of control ?
Have you burned up the touch of warm fingers
That thrilled through each pulse and each vein,
Or the sound of a voice that still lingers
And hurts with a haunting refrain ?

Is it done ? is the life drama ended ?
You have put all the lights out, and yet,
Though the curtain, rung down, has descended,
Can the actors go home and forget ?

Ah, no ! they will turn in their sleeping
With a strange restless pain in their hearts
And in darkness, and anguish, and weeping,
Will dream they are playing their parts.

A LEAF

SOMEBODY said, in the crowd, last eve,
That you were married, or soon to be.
I have not thought of you, I believe,
Since last we parted. Let me see :
Five long Summers have passed since then—
Each has been pleasant in its own way—
And you are but one of a dozen men
Who have played the suitor a Summer day.

But, nevertheless, when I heard your name,
Coupled with someone's, not my own,
There burned in my bosom a sudden flame,
That carried me back to the day that is flown.
I was sitting again by the laughing brook,
With you at my feet, and the sky above,
And my heart was fluttering under your look—
The unmistakable look of Love.

Again your breath, like a South wind, fanned
My cheek, where the blushes came and went ;
And the tender clasp of your strong, warm hand
Sudden thrills through my pulses sent.

Again you were mine by Love's own right—
Mine for ever by Love's decree :
So for a moment it seemed last night,
When somebody mentioned your name to me.
Just for the moment I thought you mine—
Loving me, wooing me, as of old.
The tale remembered seemed half divine—
Though I held it lightly enough when told.
The past seemed fairer than when it was near,
As ' blessings brighten when taking flight ;'
And just for the moment I held you dear—
When somebody mentioned your name last night.

ÆSTHETIC

IN a garb that was guiltless of colours
She stood, with a dull, listless air—
A creature of dumps and of dolours,
But most undeniably fair.
The folds of her garment fell round her,
Revealing the curve of each limb ;
Well proportioned and graceful I found her,
Although quite alarmingly slim.
From the hem of her robe peeped one sandal—
' High art ' was she down to her feet ;
And though I could not understand all
She said, I could see she was sweet.

Impressed by her limpness and languor,
I proffered a chair near at hand ;
She looked back a mild sort of anger—
Posed anew, and continued to stand.

Some praises I next tried to mutter
Of the fan that she he'd to her face ;
She said it was 'utterly utter,'
And waved it with languishing grace.

I then, in a strain quite poetic,
Begged her gaze on the bow in the sky,
She looked—said its curve was 'æsthetic.'
But the 'tone was too dreadfully high.'

Her lovely face, lit by the splendour
That glorified landscape and sea,
Woke thoughts that were daring and tender :
Did *her* thoughts, too, rest upon me ?

'Oh, tell me,' I cried, growing bolder,
'Have I in your musings a place ?'
'Well, yes,' she said over her shoulder :
'I was thinking of nothing in space.'

POEMS OF THE WEEK

SUNDAY

LIE still and rest, in that serene repose
That on this holy morning comes to those
Who have been burdened with the cares which make
The sad heart weary and the tired head ache.

Lie still and rest—
God's day of all is best.

MONDAY

Awake! arise! Cast off thy drowsy dreams;
Red in the East, behold the Morning gleams.
'As Monday goes, so goes the week,' dames say
Refreshed, renewed, use well the initial day.

And see! thy neighbour
Already seeks his labour.

TUESDAY

Another morning's banners are unfurled—
Another day looks smiling on the world.
It holds new laurels for thy soul to win;
Mar not its grace by slothfulness or sin,

Nor sad, away,
Send it to yesterday

WEDNESDAY

Half-way unto the end—the weeks high noon.
The morning hours do speed away so soon !
And, when the noon is reached, however bright,
Instinctively we look toward the night.

The glow is lost
Once the meridian cross'd.

THURSDAY

So well the week hast sped, hast thou a friend,
Go spend an hour in converse. It will lend
New beauty to thy labours and thy life
To pause a little sometimes in the strife.

Toil soon seems rude
That has no interlude.

FRIDAY

From feasts abstain ; be temperate, and pray ;
Fast if thou wilt ; and yet, throughout the day,
Neglect no labour and no duty shirk :
Not many hours are left thee for thy work—

And it were meet
That all should be complete.

GHOSTS

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SATURDAY

Now with the almost finished task make haste.
So near the night thou hast no time to waste.
Post up accounts, and let thy soul's eyes look
For flaws and errors in Life's ledger-book.

When labours cease,
How sweet the sense of peace !

GHOSTS

THERE are ghosts in the room.
As I sit here alone, from the dark corners there
They come out of the gloom,
And they stand at my side and they lean on my chair.

There's the ghost of a Hope
That lighted my days with a fanciful glow.
In her hand is the rope
That strangled her life out. Hope was slain long ago.

But her ghost comes to-night,
With its skeleton face and expressionless eyes,
And it stands in the light,
And mocks me, and jeers me with sobs and with sighs.

There's the ghost of a Joy,
A frail, fragile thing, and I prized it too much,
And the hands that destroy
Clasped it close, and it died at the withering touch.

FLEEING AWAY

There's the ghost of a Love,
Born with joy, reared with hope, died in pain and unrest,
But he towers above
All the others—this ghost : yet a ghost at the best.

I am weary, and fain
Would forget all these dead : but the gibbering host
Make my struggle in vain,
In each shadowy corner there lurketh a ghost.

FLEEING AWAY

MY thoughts soar not as they ought to soar,
Higher and higher on soul-lent wings ;
But ever and often, and more and more
They are dragged down earthward by little things,
By little troubles and little needs,
As a lark might be tangled among the weeds.

My purpose is not what it ought to be,
Steady and fixed like a star on high,
But more like a fisherman's light at sea ;
Hither and thither it seems to fly—
Sometimes feeble, and sometimes bright,
Then suddenly lost in the gloom of night.

FLEEING AWAY

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My life is far from my dream of life—
Calmly contented, serenely glad ;
But, vexed and worried by daily strife,
It is always troubled, and oftentimes sad—
And the heights I had thought I should reach one day
Grow dimmer and dimmer, and farther away.
My heart finds never the longed-for rest ;
Its worldly striving, its greed for gold,
Chilled and frightened the calm-eyed guest,
Who sometimes sought me in days of old ;
And ever fleeing away from me
Is the higher self that I long to be.

ALL MAD

HE is mad as a hare, poor fellow,
And should be in chains, ' you say.
I haven't a doubt of your statement,
But who isn't mad, I pray ?
Why, the world is a great asylum,
And people are all insane,
Gone daft with pleasure or folly,
Or crazed with passion and pain.
The infant who shrieks at a shadow,
The child with his Santa Claus faith,
The woman who worships Dame Fashion,
Each man with his notions of death,

The miser who hoards up his earnings,
The spendthrift who wastes them too soon,
The scholar grown blind in his delving,
The lover who stares at the moon,
The poet who thinks life a pæan,
The cynic who thinks it a fraud,
The youth who goes seeking for pleasure,
The preacher who dares talk of God,
All priests with their creeds and their croaking,
All doubters who dare to deny,
The gay who find aught to wake laughter,
The sad who find aught worth a sigh,
Whoever is downcast or solemn,
Whoever is gleeful and glad,
Are only the dupes of delusions—
We are all of us—all of us mad.

HIDDEN GEMS

WE know not what lies in us, till we seek ;
Men dive for pearls—they are not found on
shore,
The hillsides most unpromising and bleak
Do sometimes hide the ore.
Go, dive in the vast ocean of thy mind,
O man ! far down below the noisy waves
Down in the depths and silence thou mayst find
Rare pearls and coral caves.

BY-AND-BYE

309

Sink thou a shaft into the mine of thought ;
Be patient, like the seekers after gold ;
Under the rocks and rubbish lieth what
May bring thee wealth untold.

Reflected from the vastly Infinite,
However dulled by earth, each human mind
Holds somewhere gems of beauty and of light
Which, seeking, thou shalt find.

BY-AND-BYE

BY-AND-BYE,' the maiden sighed—'by-
and-bye

He will claim me for his bride,
Hope is strong and time is fleet ;
Youth is fair, and love is sweet,
Clouds will pass that fleck my sky,
He will come back by-and-bye—by-and-bye.'

'By-and-bye,' the soldier said—'by-and-bye,
After I have fought and bled,
I shall go home from the wars,
Crowned with glory, seamed with scars.
Joy will flash from some one's eye
When she greets me by-and-bye—by-and-bye.'

BY-AND-BYE

'By-and-bye,' the mother cried—'by-and-bye,
Strong and sturdy at my side,
Like a staff supporting me,
Will my bonnie baby be.
Break my rest, then, wail and cry—
Thou'lt repay me by-and-bye—by-and-bye.'

Fleeting years of time have sped—hurried by—
Still the maiden is unwed:
All unknown the soldier lies,
Buried under alien skies;
And the son, with blood-shot eyes,
Saw his mother starve and die.
God in Heaven! dost Thou on high,
Keep the promised 'by-and-bye'—by-and-bye?

OVER THE MAY HILL

ALL through the night time, and all through the
day time,
Dreading the morning and dreading the night,
Nearer and nearer we drift to the May time
Season of beauty and season of blight,
Leaves on the linden, and sun on the meadow,
Green in the garden, and bloom everywhere,
Gloom in my heart, and a terrible shadow,
Walks by me, sits by me, stands by my chair.

OVER THE MAY HILL

311

Oh, but the birds by the brooklet are cheery,

Oh, but the woods show such delicate greens,

Strange how you droop and how soon you are weary—

Too well I know what that weariness means.

But how could I know in the crisp winter weather

(Though sometimes I noticed a catch in your
breath),

Riding and singing and dancing together,

How could I know you were racing with death?

How could I know when we danced until morning,

And you were the gayest of all the gay crowd—

With only that shortness of breath for a warning,

How could I know that you danced for a shroud?

Whirling and whirling through moonlight and star-
light,

Rocking as lightly as boats on the wave,

Down in your eyes shone a deep light—a far light,

How could I know 'twas the light to your grave?

Day by day, day by day, nearing and nearing,

Hid under greenness, and beauty and bloom,

Cometh the shape and the shadow I'm fearing,

'Over the May hill' is waiting your tomb.

The season of mirth and of music is over—

I have danced my last dance, I have sung my last
song,

Under the violets, under the clover,

My heart and my love will be lying ere long.

FOES

THANK Fate for foes ! I hold mine dear
As valued friends. He cannot know
The zest of life who runneth here
His earthly race without a foe.

I saw a prize. 'Run,' cried my friend ;
'Tis thine to claim without a doubt.'
But ere I half-way reached the end,
I felt my strength was giving out.

My foe looked on the while I ran ;
A scornful triumph lit his eyes.
With that perverseness born in man,
I nerved myself, and won the prize.

All blinded by the crimson glow
Of sin's disguise, I tempted Fate.
'I knew thy weakness !' sneered my foe,
I saved myself, and balked his hate.

For half my blessings, half my gain,
I needs must thank my trusty foe ;
Despite his envy and disdain,
He serves me well where'er I go.

So may I keep him to the end,
Nor may his enmity abate :
More faithful than the fondest friend,
He guards me ever with his hate.

FRIENDSHIP

DEAR friend, I pray thee, if thou wouldst be
proving

Thy strong regard for me,
Make me no vows. Lip-service is not loving ;
Let thy faith speak for thee.

Swear not to me that nothing can divide us—
So little such oaths mean.
But when distrust and envy creep beside us
Let them not come between.

Say not to me the depths of thy devotion
Are deeper than the sea ;
But watch, lest doubt or some unkind emotion
Embitter them for me.

Vow not to love me ever and for ever,
Words are such idle things ;
But when we differ in opinions, never
Hurt me by little stings.

I'm sick of words : they are so lightly spoken,
And spoken, are but air.
I'd rather feel thy trust in me unbroken
Than list thy words so fair.

If all the little proofs of trust are heeded,
If thou art always kind,
No sacrifice, no promise will be needed
To satisfy my mind.

TWO SAT DOWN

TWO sat down in the morning time,
One to sing and one to spin.
All men listened the song sublime—
But no one listened the dull wheel's din.

The singer sat in a pleasant nook,
And sang of a life that was fair and sweet,
While the spinner sat with a steadfast look,
Busily plying her hands and feet.

The singer sang on with a rose in her hair,
And all men listened her dulcet tone ;
And the spinner spun on with a dull despair
Down in her heart as she sat alone.

But lo ! on the morrow no one said
Aught of the singer or what she sang.
Men were saying : ' Behold this thread,'
And loud the praise of the spinner rang.

The world has forgotten the singer's name—
Her rose is faded, her songs are old ;
But far o'er the ocean the spinner's fame
Yet is blazoned in lines of gold.

BOUND AND FREE

COME to me, Love! Come on the wings of the wind!
Fly as the ring-dove would fly to his mate!
Leave all your cares and your sorrows behind!
Leave all the fears of your future to Fate!
Come! and our skies shall be glad with the gold
That paled into gray when you parted from me
Come! but remember that, just as of old,
You must be bound, Love, and I must be free.

Life has lost savour since you and I parted;
I have been lonely, and you have been sad.
Youth is too brief to be sorrowful-hearted—
Come! and again let us laugh and be glad.
Lips should not sigh that are fashioned to kiss—
Breasts should not ache that joy's secrets have found.
Come! but remember, in spite of all this,
I must be free, Love, while you must be bound.

You must be bound to be true while you live,
And I keep my freedom for ever, as now.
You must ask only for that which I give—
Kisses and love-words, but never a vow.
Come! I am lonely, and long for your smile,
Bring back the lost lovely Summer to me!
Come! but remember, remember the while,
That you must be bound, Love, and I must be free.

AQUILEIA

'On the election of the Roman Emperor Maximus, by the Senate, A.D. 238, a powerful army, headed by the Thracian giant Maximus, laid siege to Aquileia. Though poorly prepared for war, the constancy of her citizens rendered her impregnable. The women of Aquileia cut off their hair to make ropes for the military engines. The small body of troops was directed by Crispinus, a Lieutenant of the Senate. Apollo was the deity supposed to protect them.'—GIBBON: *Roman History*.

'THE ropes, the ropes! Apollo send us ropes,'
Crispinus cried, 'or death attends our hopes.'
Then panic reigned, and many a mournful sound
Hurt the cleft air; for where could ropes be found?

Up rose a Roman mother; tall was she
As her own son, a youth of noble height.
A little child was clinging to her knee—
She loosed his twining arms and put him down,
And her dark eyes flashed with a sudden light.
How like a queen she stood! her royal crown,
The rich dark masses of her splendid hair.
Just flecked with spots of sunshine here and there,
Twined round her brow; 'twas like a coronet,
Where gems of gold lie bedded deep in jet.

She loosed the comb that held the shining strands,
And threaded out the meshes with her hands.

The purple mass fell to her garment's hem.
A queen new clothed without her diadem
She stood before her subjects.

‘Now,’ she cried,
‘Give me thy sword, Julianus!’ And her son
Unsheathed the blade (that had not left his side
Save when it sought a foeman to shed),
Awed by her regal bearing, and stood.

With the white beauty of her firm fair hand
She clasped the hilt; then severed, one by one,
Her gold-flecked purple tresses. Strand on strand,
Free e’en as foes had fallen by that blade,
Robbed of its massive wealth of curl and coil,
Yet like some antique model, rose her head
In all its classic beauty.

‘See!’ she said,
And pointed to the shining mound of hair;
‘Apollo makes swift answer to thy prayer,
Chrispinus. Quick! now, soldiers, to thy toil!’
Forth from a thousand throats what seemed one voice
Rose shrilly, filling all the air with cheer.
‘Lo!’ quoth the foe, ‘our enemies rejoice!’
Well might the Thracian giant quake with fear!
For while skilled hands caught up the gleaming
threads
And bound them into cords, a hundred heads

318 WISHES FOR A LITTLE GIRL

Yielded their beauteous tresses to the sword,
And cast them down to swell the precious hoard.
Nor was the noble sacrifice in vain :
Another day beheld the giant slain.

WISHES FOR A LITTLE GIRL

WHAT would I ask the kindly fates to give
To crown her life, if I could have my way ?
My strongest wishes would be negative,
If they would but obey.

Give her not greatness. For great souls must stand
Alone and lonely in this little world :
Cleft rocks that show the great Creator's hand,
Thither by earthquakes hurled.

Give her not genius. Spare her the cruel pain
Of finding her whole life a prey for daws ;
Of hearing with quickened sense and burning brain
The world's sneer-tinged applause.

Give her not perfect beauty's gifts. For then
Her truthful mirror would infuse her mind
With love for self, and for the praise of men,
That lowers woman-kind.

But make her fair and comely to the sight,
Give her more heart than brain, more love than pride
Let her be tender-thoughted, cheerful, bright,
Some strong man's star and guide.

Not vainly questioning why she was sent
Into this restless world of toil and strife,
Let her go bravely on her way, content
To make the best of life.

ROMNEY

NAY, Romney, nay—I will not hear you say
Those words again: 'I love you, love you
sweet!'

You are profane—blasphemous. I repeat,
You are no actor for so grand a play.

You love with all your heart? Well, that may be;
Some cups are fashioned shallow. Should I try
To quench my thirst from one of those, when dry—
I who have had a full bowl proffered me—

A new bowl brimming with a draught divine,
One single taste thrilled to the finger-tips?
Think you I even care to bathe my lips
With this poor sweetened water you call wine?

And though I spilled the nectar ere 'twas quaffed,
And broke the bowl in wanton folly, yet
I would die of my thirst ere I would wet
My burning lips with any meaner draught.

So leave me, Romney. One who has seen a play
Enacted by a star cannot endure
To see it rendered by an amateur.
You know not what Love is—now go away!

MY HOME

THIS is the place that I love the best,
A little brown house like a ground-bird's
nest,

Hid among grasses, and vines, and trees,
Summer retreat of the birds and bees.

The tenderest light that ever was seen
Sifts through the vine-made window screen—
Sifts and quivers, and flits and falls
On home-made carpets and gray-hung walls.

All through June, the west wind free
The breath of the clover brings to me.
All through the languid July day
I catch the scent of the new-mown hay.

The morning glories and scarlet vine
Over the doorway twist and twine;
And every day, when the house is still,
The humming-bird comes to the window-sill.

MY HOME

321

In the cunningest chamber under the sun
I sink to sleep when the day is done ;
And am waked at morn, in my snow-white bed,
By a singing-bird on the roof o'erhead.

Better than treasures brought from Rome
Are the living pictures I see at home—
My aged father, with frosted hair,
And mother's face like a painting rare,
Far from the city's dust and heat,
I get but sounds and odours sweet.
Who can wonder I love to stay,
Week after week, here hidden away,
In this sly nook that I love the best—
The little brown house, like a ground-bird's nest ?

TO MARRY OR NOT TO MARRY !

A GIRL'S REVERIE

MOTHER says, ' Be in no hurry,
Marriage oft means care and worry '

Auntie says, with manner grave,
' Wife is synonym for slave.'

Father asks, in tones commanding,
' How does Bradstreet rate his standing ?'

Sister, crooning to her twins,
Sighs, ' With marriage care begins.'

322 TO MARRY OR NOT TO MARRY?

Grandma, near life's closing days,
Murmurs, 'Sweet are girlhood's ways.'

Maud, twice widowed ('od and grass
Looks at me and moans 'Alas!':

They are six, and I am one,
Life for me has just begun.

They are older, calmer, wiser:
Age should aye be youth's adviser.

They must know—and yet, dear me,
When in Harry's eyes I see

All the world of love there burning—
On my six advisers turning,

I make answer, 'Oh, but Harry
Is not like most men who marry.

'Fate has offered me a prize,
Life with love means Paradise.

'Life without it is not worth
All the foolish joys of earth.'

So, in spite of all they say,
I shall name the wedding day.

AN AFTERNOON

I AM stirred by the dream of an afternoon
Of a perfect day—though it was not June ;
The lilt of winds, and the droning tune
That a busy city was humming.

And a bronze-brown head, and lips like wine
Leaning out through the window-vine
A-list for steps that were 'maybe mine—
Eager steps that were coming.

I can see it all, as a dreamer may—
The tender smile on your lips that day,
And the glow on your cheek as we rode away
To the golden weather.

And a love-light shone in your eyes of brown—
I swear there did !—as we drove down
The crowded avenue out of the town,
Through shadowy lanes, together :

Drove out into the sunset-skies
That glowed with wonderful crimson dyes ;
And with soul and spirit, and heart and eyes,
We silently drank their splendour.

But the golden glory that lit the place
Was not alone from the sunset's grace—
For I saw in your fair, uplifted face
A light that was wondrously tender.

RIVER AND SEA

I say I saw it And yet to-day
I ask myself, in a cynical way,
Was it only a part you had learned to play,
To see me act the lover?

And I curse myself for a fool. And yet
I would willingly die without one regret
Could I bring back the day whose sun has set—
And you—and live it over.

RIVER AND SEA

WE stood by the river that swept
In its glory and grandeur away;
But never a pulse o' me leapt,
And you wondered at me that day.

We stood by the lake as it lay
With its dimpled face turned to the light;
Was it strange I had nothing to say
To so fair and enchanting a sight?

I look on your tresses of gold—
You are fair and a thing to be loved—
Do you think I am heartless and cold
That I look and am wholly unmoved?

One answer, dear friend, I will make
To the questions your eyes ask of me:
'Talk not of the river or lake'
To those who have looked on the sea.'

WHAT HAPPENS?

WHEN thy hand touches mine, through all the
 mesh
 Of intricate and interlacèd veins
 Shoot swift delights that border on keen pains :
 Flesh thrills to thrilling flesh.

When in thine eager eyes I look to find
 A comrade to my thought, thy ready brain
 Delves down and makes its inmost meaning plain ;
 Mind answers unto mind.

When hands and eyes are hid by seas that roll
 Wide wastes between us, still so near thou art
 I count the very pulses of thy heart :
 Soul speaketh unto soul.

So every law, or human or divine,
 In heart and brain and spirit makes thee mine.

POSSESSION

THAT which we had we still possess,
 Though leaves may drop and stars may
 fall ;
 No circumstance can make it less,
 Or take it from us, all in all.

That which is lost we did not own ;
We only held it for a day—
A leaf by careless breezes blown ;
No fate could take our own away.

I hold it as a changeless law
From which no soul can sway or swerve,
We have that in us which will draw
Whate'er we need or most deserve.

Even as the magnet to the steel
Our souls are to our best desires ;
The Fates have hearts and they can feel—
They know what each true life requires.

We think we lose when we most gain ;
We call joys ended ere begun ;
When stars fade out do skies complain,
Or glory in the rising sun ?

No fate could rob us of our own—
No circumstance can make it less ;
What time removes was but a loan,
For what was ours we still possess.

POEMS OF SENTIMENT



DOUBLE CARNATIONS

A WILD Pink nestled in a garden bed,
A rich Carnation flourished high above her,
One day he chanced to see her pretty head
And leaned and looked again, and grew to love her.

The Moss (her humble mother) saw with fear
The ardent glances of the princely stranger ;
With many an anxious thought and dewy tear
She sought to hide her darling from this danger.

The gardener-guardian of this noble bud
A cruel trellis interposed between them.
No common Pink should mate with royal blood,
He said, and sought in every way to wean them.

The poor Pink pined and faded day by day :
Her restless lover from his prison bower
Called in a priestly bee who passed that way,
And sent a message to the sorrowing flower.

The fainting Pink wept as the bee drew near
Droning his prayers, and begged him to confess her.
Her weary mother, over-taxed by fear,
Slept, while the priest leaned low to shrive and bless
her.

NEVER MIND

But lo ! ere long the tale went creeping out,
 The rich Carnation and the Pink were married !
 The cunning bee had brought the thing about
 While Mamma Moss in Slumber's arms had tarried.

And proud descendants of that loving pair,
 The offspring of that true and ardent passion,
 Are famous for their beauty everywhere,
 And leaders in the floral world of fashion.

NEVER MIND

WHATEVER your work and whatever its worth,
 matter how strong or clever,
 Some one will sneer if you pause to hear,
 And scoff at your best endeavour.
 For the target art has a broad expanse,
 And wherever you chance to hit it,
 Though close be your aim to the bull's-eye fame,
 There are those who will never admit it.

Though the house applauds while the artist plays,
 And a smiling world adores him,
 Somebody is there with an ennuied air
 To say that the acting bores him.
 For the tower of art has a lofty spire,
 With many a stair and landing,
 And those who climb seem small oft-time
 To one at the bottom standing.

TWO WOMEN

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So work along in your chosen niche
With a steady purpose to nerve you ;
Let nothing men say who pass your way
Relax your courage or swerve you.
The idle will flock by the 'Temple of Art'
For just the pleasure of gazing ;
But climb to the top and do not stop,
Though they may not all be praising.

TWO WOMEN

I KNOW two women, and one is chaste
And cold as the snows on a winter waste,
Stainless ever in act and thought
(As a man, born dumb, in speech errs not).
But she has malice toward her kind,
A cruel tongue, and a jealous mind.
Void of pity and full of greed,
She judges the world by her narrow creed ;
A brewer of quarrels, a breeder of hate,
Yet she holds the key to 'Society's' Gate.

The other woman, with heart of flame,
Went mad for a love that marred her name :
And out of the grave of her murdered faith
She rose like a soul that has passed through death.
Her aims are noble, her pity so broad,
It covers the world like the mercy of God.

333 IT ALL WILL COME OUT RIGHT

A soother of discord, a healer of woes,
Peace follows her footsteps wherever she goes.
The worthier life of the two, no doubt,
And yet 'Society' locks her out.

IT ALL WILL COME OUT RIGHT

WHATEVER is a cruel wrong,
Whatever is unjust,
The honest years that speed along
Will trample in the dust.
In restless youth I railed at fate
With all my puny might,
But now I know if I but wait
It all will come out right.

Though Vice may don the judge's gown
And play the censor's part,
And Fact be cowed by Falsehood's frown
And Nature ruled by art;
Though Labour toils through blinding tears
And idle Wealth is might,
I know the honest, earnest years
Will bring it all out right.

Though poor and loveless creeds may pass
For pure religion's gold;
Though ignorance may rule the mass
While truth meets glances cold,

A WARNING

333

I know a law complete, sublime,
Controls us with its might,
And in God's own appointed time
It all will come out right.

A WARNING

THERE was a flame, oh ! such a tiny flame—
One fleeting hour had spanned its birth and
death,

But for a silly child with playful breath
Who fanned it into fury. It became
A mighty conflagration. Ah, the cost !
House, home, and thoughtless child alike were lost.

Lady beware. Fan not the harmless glow
Of admiration into ardent love,
Lean not with red curled smiling lips above
The flickering spark of sinless flame, and blow,
Lest in the sudden waking of desire
Thou, like the child, shalt perish in the fire.

SHRINES

ABOUT a holy shrine or sacred place,
Where many hearts have bowed in earnest prayer,
The loveliest spirits congregate from space,
And bring their sweet, uplifting influence there.

THE WATCHER

If in your chamber you pray oft and well,
Soon will these angel-messengers arrive
And make their home with you, and where they dwell
All worthy toil and purposes shall thrive.

I know a humble, plainly furnished room,
So thronged with presences serene and bright,
The heaviest heart therein forgets its gloom
As in some gorgeous temple filled with light.

Those heavenly spirits, beauteous and divine,
Live only in an atmosphere of prayer ;
Make for yourself a sacred, fervent shrine,
And you will find them swiftly flocking there.

THE WATCHER

SHE gave her soul and body for a carriage,
And liveried lackey with a vacant grin,
And all the rest—house, lands—and called it marriage :
The bargain made, a husband was thrown in.

And now, despite her luxury, she's faded,
Gone is the bloom that was so fresh and bright ;
She has the dark-rimmed eye, the countenance jaded,
Of one who watches with the sick at night.

Ah, heaven, she does! her sick heart, sick and dying,
Beyond the aid of human skill to save,
In that cold room her breast is hourly lying,
And her grim thoughts crowd near to dig its grave

SWIMMING SONG

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And yet it lingers, suffering and wailing,
As sick hearts will that feed upon despair
And that lone watcher, unrelieved, is paling
With vigils that no pitying soul can share.

Ah, lady! it is hardly what you thought it,
This life of luxury and social power;
You gave yourself a principal, and bought it,
But God extracts the interest hour by hour.

SWIMMING SONG

I AM coming, coming to thee,
My strong-armed lover, the Sea!
On thy great broad breast I will lie and rest,
And thou shalt talk to me.

I have come to thee, all unsought,
I have stolen an hour from thought,
And peace and power thou canst give in that hour,
Which thy rival Earth gives not.

Alone here, under the sky,
And the whole world drifting by!
Thy breast of brine thrills close to mine,
While the cloudless sun sails high.

I fly, but thou givest chase—
Thy kisses are on my face!
Be bold and free as thou wilt, O Sea,
There is life in thy close embrace.

THE LAW

Throat and cheek and tress
Are damp where thy salt lips press
There is strength and bliss in thy daring kiss,
And joy in thy bold caress.

And what is the Earth to me
I have left it all, O Sea !
With its dust and soil and strife and toil,
For one glad hour with thee.

THE LAW

THE sun may be clouded, yet ever the sun
Will sweep on its course till the cycle is run.
And when into chaos the systems are hurled,
Again shall the Builder reshape a new world.

Your path may be clouded, uncertain your goal;
Move on, for the orbit is fixed for your soul.
And though it may lead into darkness of night,
The torch of the Builder shall give it new light.

You were, and you will be : know this while you are
Your spirit has travelled both long and afar.
It came from the Source, to the Source it returns ;
The spark that was lighted, eternally burns.

It slept in the jewel, it leaped in the wave,
It roamed in the forest, it rose in the grave,
It took on strange garbs for long æons of years,
And now in the soul of yourself it appears.

THE LAW

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From body to body your spirit speeds on ;
It seeks a new form when the old one is gone ;
And the form that it finds is the fabric you wrought
On the loom of the mind, with the fibre of thought.

As dew is drawn upward, in rain to descend,
Your thoughts drift away and in destiny blend.
You cannot escape them ; or petty, or great,
Or evil, or noble, they fashion your fate.

Somewhere on some planet, sometime and somehow,
Your life will reflect all the thoughts of your now.
The law is unerring ; no blood can atone ;
The structure you rear you must live in alone.

From cycle to cycle, through time and through space
Your lives with your longings will ever keep pace.
And all that you ask for, and all you desire,
Must come at your bidding, as flames out of fire.

Once list to that voice and all tumult is done,
Your life is the life of the Infinite One ;
In the hurrying race you are conscious of pause,
With love for the purpose and love for the cause.

You are your own devil, you are your own God,
You fashioned the paths that your footsteps have trod ;
And no one can save you from error or sin,
Until you shall hark to the Spirit within.

LOVE, TIME, AND WILL

A SOUL immortal, Time, God everywhere,
 Without, within—how can a heart despair,
 Or talk of failure, obstacles, and doubt ?
 (What proofs of God ? The little seeds that sprout,
 Life, and the solar system, and their laws.
 Nature ? Ah, yes ; but what was Nature's cause ?)

All mighty words are short : God, life, and death,
 War, peace, and truth, are uttered in a breath.
 And briefly said are love, and will, and time ;
 Yet in them lies a majesty sublime.

Love is the vast constructive power of space ;
 Time is the hour which calls it into place ;
 Will is the means of using time and love,
 And bringing forth the heart's desires thereof.

The way is love, the time is now, and will
 The patient method. Let this knowledge fill
 Thy consciousness, and fate and circumstance,
 Environment, and all the ills of chance
 Must yield before the concentrated might
 Of those three words, as shadows yield to light.

Go, charge thyself with love ; be infinite
 And opulent with thy large use of it :
 'Tis from free sowing that full harvest springs ;
 Love God and life and all created things.

THE TWO AGES

339

Learn time's great value : to this mandate bow,
The hour of opportunity is Now,
And from thy will, as from a well-strung bow,
Let the swift arrows of thy wishes go.
Though sent into the distance and the dark,
The dawn shall prove thy arrows hit the mark.

THE TWO AGES

ON great cathedral window I have seen
A summer sunset swoon and sink away,
Lost in the splendours of immortal art.
Angels and saints and all the heavenly hosts,
With smiles undimmed by half a thousand years,
From wall and niche have met my lifted gaze.
Sculpture and carving and illumined page,
And the fair, lofty dreams of architects,
That speak of beauty to the centuries—
All these have fed me with divine repasts.
Yet in my mouth is left a bitter taste,
The taste of blood that stained that age of art.

Those glorious windows shine upon the black
And hideous structure of the guillotine ;
Beside the haloed countenance of saints
There hangs the multiple and knotted lash.
The Christ of love, benign and beautiful,
Looks at the torture-rack, by hate conceived
And bigotry sustained. The prison cell,

With blood-stained walls, where starving men went
mad,
Lies under turrets matchless in their grace.

God, what an age ! How was it that You let
Colossal genius and colossal crime
Walk for a hundred years across the earth,
Like giant twins ? How was it then that men,
Conceiving such vast beauty for the world,
And such large hopes of heaven, could entertain
Such hellish projects for their fellow-men ?
How could the hand that, with consummate skill
And loving patience, limned the luminous page,
Drop pen and brush, and seize the branding-rod,
To scourge a brother for his differing faith ?

Not great this age in beauty or in art ;
Nothing is wrought to-day that shall endure,
For earth's adornment, through long centuries.
Not ours the fervid worship of a God
That wastes its splendid opulence on glass,
Leaving but hate, to give it mortal kin.
Yet great this age : its mighty work is man
Knowing himself, the universal life.
And great our faith, which shows itself in words
For human freedom and for racial good.
The true religion lies in being kind.
No age is greater than its faith is broad.
Through liberty and love men climb to God.

COULEUR DE ROSE

I WANT more lives in which to love
 This world so full of beauty,
 I want more days to use the ways
 I know of doing duty;
 I ask no greater joy than this
 (So much I am life's lover),
 When I reach age to turn the page
 And read the story over.
 (O love, stay near !)

O rapturous promise of the Spring !
 O June fulfilling after !
 If Autumns sigh, when Summers die,
 'Tis drowned in Winter's laughter.
 O maiden dawns, O wifely noons,
 O siren sweet, sweet nights,
 I'd want no heaven could earth be given
 Again with its delights
 (If love stayed near).

There are such glories for the eye,
 Such pleasures for the ear,
 The senses reel with all they feel
 And see and taste and hear ;

There are such ways of doing good,
Such ways of being kind,
And bread that's cast on waters fast
Comes home again, I find.
(O love, stay near.)

There are such royal souls to know,
There is so much to learn,
While secrets rest in Nature's breast
And unnamed stars still burn.
God toiled six days to make this earth,
I think the good folks say—
Six lives we need to give full meed
Of praise—one for each day
(If love stay near).

But oh ! if love fled far away,
Or veiled his face from me,
One life too much, why then were such
A life as this would be.
With sullen May and blighted June,
Blurred dawn and haggard night,
This dear old world in space were hurled
If love lent not his light.
(O love, stay near !)

LAST LOVE

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LAST LOVE

THE first flower of the spring is not so fair
Or bright as one the ripe mid-summer brings.
The first faint note the forest warbler sings
Is not as rich with feeling, or so rare
As when, full master of his art, the air
Drowns in the liquid sea of song he flings
Like silver spray from beak, and breast, and wings.
The artist's earliest effort, wrought with care,
The bard's first ballad, written in his tears,
Set by his later toil, seems poor and tame,
And into nothing dwindles at the test.
So with the passions of maturer years.
Let those who will demand the first fond flame,
Give me the heart's *last love*, for that is best.

LIFE'S TRACK

THIS game of life is a dangerous play,
Each human soul must watch alway,
From the first to the very last.
I care not however strong and pure—
Let no man say he is perfectly sure
The dangerous reefs are past.

For many a rock may lurk near by,
That never is seen when the tide is high—
Let no man dare to boast,
When the hand is full of trumps—beware,
For that is the time when thought and care
And nerve are needed most.

As the oldest jockey knows to his cost,
Full many a well-run race is lost
A brief half length from the wire.
And many a soul that has fought with sin,
And gained each battle, at last gives in
To sudden, fierce desire.

And vain seems the effort of spur and whip,
Or the hoarse, hot cry of the pallid lip,
When once we have fallen back.
It is better to keep on stirrup and rein,
The steady poise and the careful strain,
In speeding along Life's track.

A watchful eye and a strong, true hand
Will carry us under the Judge's stand,
If prayer, too, does its part;
And little by little the struggling soul
Will grow and strengthen and gain control
Over the passionate heart.

AN ODE TO TIME

HO! sportsman Time, whose chargers fleet
The moments, madly driven,
Beat in the dust beneath their feet
Sweet hopes that years have given;
Turn, turn aside those reckless steeds,
Oh! do not urge them my way;
There's nothing that Time wants or needs
In this contented by-way.

You have down-trodden, in your race,
So much that proves your power,
Why not avoid my humble place?
Why rob me of my dower?
With your vast cellars, cavern deep,
Packed tier on tier with treasures,
You would not miss them should I *keep*
My little store of pleasures.

As one who, frightened, flying, flings
Her riches down at random,
Your course is paved with precious things
Life casts before your tandem:
The warrior's fame, the conqueror's crown,
Great creeds for ages cherished,
Beneath your chariot-wheels were thrown,
And, crushed to earth, they perished.

AN ODE TO TIME

Although to just and generous deeds
Your heart is not a stranger,
I have the feeling that one needs
To guard his wealth from danger.
And though a most heroic light
Oft on your pathway lingers,
I'd hide my treasures, if I might,
From contact with your fingers.

You are the loyal friend of Truth,
Go seek her, make her stronger,
And leave the remnant of my youth
To me a little longer.
There's work enough for you before
Eternity shall wed you :
Why stoop to steal my simple store?
Why make me shun and dread you ?

You do not need my joys, I say,
Home, love, and friends united—
I beg you turn and go the way
Where wrong waits to be righted ;
Or pause, and let us chat awhile :
I'll listen—not too near you,
For oh ! no matter how you smile,
I fear you, Time, I fear you !

REGRET AND REMORSE

REGRET with streaming eyes doth seem alway
A maiden widowed on her wedding day.

While dark Remorse, with eyes too sad for tears,
A crushed, desponding Magdalene appears.

One, with a hungering heart unsatisfied,
Mourns for imagined joys that were denied.

The other, pierced by recollected sin,
Broods o'er the scars of pleasures that have been.

EASTER MORN

A TRUTH that has long lain buried
At Superstition's door,
I see, in the dawn uprising
In all its strength once more.

Hidden away in the darkness,
By Ignorance crucified,
Crushed under stones of dogmas—
Yet lo! it has not died.

It stands in the light transfigured,
It speaks from the heights above,
** Each soul is its own redeemer;
There is no law but Love.**

BLIND

And the spirits of men are gladdened
 As they welcome this Truth re-born
 With its feet on the grave of Error
 And its eyes to the Easter Morn.

BLIND

WHATEVER a man may think or feel
 He can tell to the world and it hears aright;
 But it bids the woman conceal, conceal,
 And woe to the thoughts that at last ignite.
 She may serve up gossip or dwell on fashion,
 Or play the critic with speech unkind,
 But alas for the woman who speaks with passion!
 For the world is blind—for the world is blind.

It is woman who sits with her starved desire,
 And drinks to sorrow in cups of tears;
 She reads by the light of her soul on fire
 The secrets of love through lonely years:
 But out of all she has felt or heard
 Or read by the glow of her soul's white flame,
 If she dare but utter aloud one word—
 How the world cries shame!—how the world cries
 shame!

It cannot distinguish between the glow
 Of a gleaming star, in the sky of gold,
 Or a spent cigar in the dust below—
 'Twixt unclad Eve or a wanton bold;

THE YELLOW-COVERED ALMANAC 349

And ever if woman speaks what she feels
(And feels consistent with God's great plan)
It has cast her under its juggernaut wheels,
Since the world began—since the world began.

THE YELLOW-COVERED ALMANAC

I LEFT the farm when mother died and changed my
place of dwelling
To daughter Susie's stylish house right on the city
street :
And there was them before I came that sort of scared
me, telling
How I would find the town folks' ways so difficult to
meet ;
They said I'd have no comfort in the rustling, fixed-up
throne,
And I'd have to wear stiff collars every week-day,
right along.
I find I take to city ways just like a duck to water ;
I like the racket and the noise and never tire of
shows ;
And there's no end of comfort in the mansion of my
daughter,
And everything is right at hand and money freely
flows ;
And hired help is all about, just listenin' to my call—
But I miss the yellow almanac off my old kitchen wall.

350 THE YELLOW-COVERED ALMANAC

The house is full of calendars from attic to the cellar,

They're painted in all colours and are fancy like to see,

But in this one particular I'm not a modern feller,

And the yellow-coloured almanac is good enough for me.

I'm used to it, I've seen it round from boyhood to old

men,

And I rather like the jokin' at the bottom of the page.

I like the way its 'S' stood out to show the week's beginning,

(In these new-fangled calendars the days seem sort of mixed),

And the man upon the cover, though he wa'n't exactly winnin',

With lungs and liver all exposed, still showed how we are fixed ;

And the letters and credentials that was writ to Mr. Ayer

I've often on a rainy day found readin' pretty fair.

I tried to buy one recently ; there wa'n't none in the city!

They toted out great calendars, in every shape and style.

THE LITTLE WHITE HEARSE 351

I looked at 'em in cold disdain, and answered 'em in
pity—

'I'd rather have my almanac than all that costly pile.
And though I take to city life, I'm lonesome after all
For that old yellow almanac upon my kitchen wall.

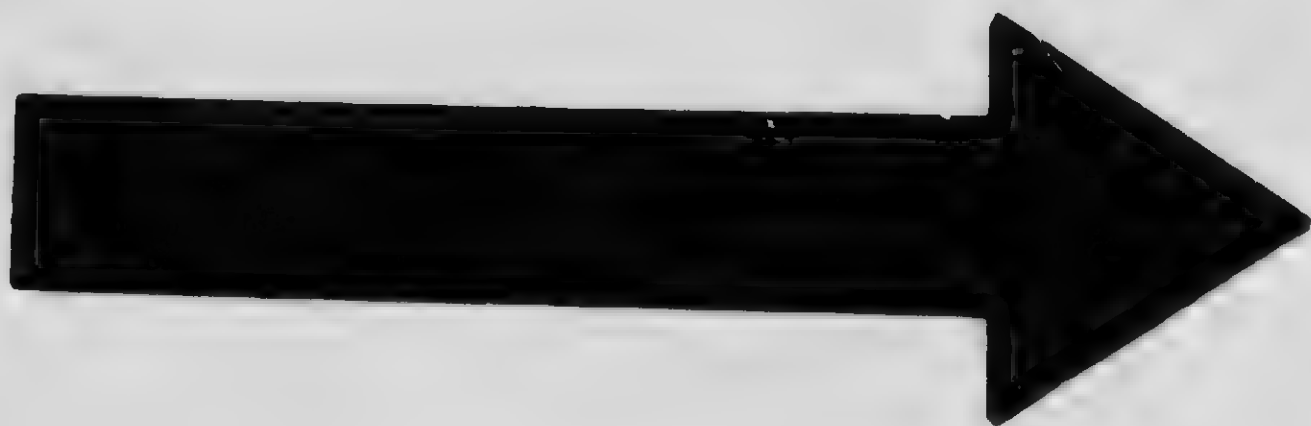
THE LITTLE WHITE HEARSE

SOMEBODY'S baby was buried to-day—
The empty white hearse from the grave rumbled
back,

And the morning somehow seemed less smiling and gay
As I paused on the walk while it crossed on its way,
And a shadow seemed drawn o'er the sun's golden
track.

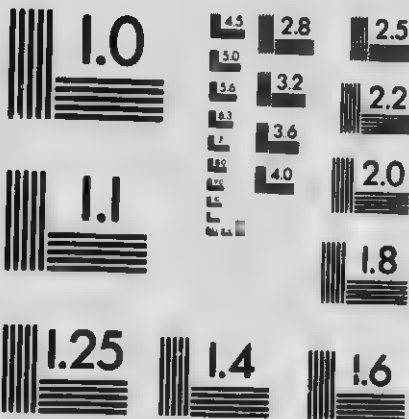
Somebody's baby was laid out to rest,
White as a snowdrop, and fair to behold,
And the soft little hands were crossed over the breast,
And those hands and the lips and the eyelids were
pressed
With kisses as hot as the eyelids were cold.

Somebody saw it go out of her sight,
Under the coffin lid—out through the door;
Somebody finds only darkness and blight
All through the glory of summer-sun light;
Somebody's baby will waken no more.



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



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Somebody's sorrow is making me weep:

I know not her name, but I echo her cry,
For the dearly bought baby she longed so to keep,
The baby that rode to its long-lasting sleep
In the little white hearse that went rumbling by.

I know not her name, but her sorrow I know;

While I paused on the crossing I lived it once more,
And back to my heart surged that river of woe
That but in the breast of a mother can flow;
For the little white hearse has been, too, at *my* door.

REALISATION

(AT THE OLD HOMESTEAD)

I TREAD the paths of earlier times
Where all my steps were set to rhymes.

I gaze on scenes I used to see
When dreaming of a vague To be.

I walk in ways made bright of old
By hopes youth-limned in hues of gold.

But lo! those hopes of future bliss
Seem dull beside the joy that *is*.

My noonday skies are far more bright
Than those dreamed of in morning's light,

And life gives me more joys to hold
Than all it promised me of old.

SUCCESS

AS we gaze up life's slope, as we gaze
 In the morn, ere the dewdrops are dry,
 What splendour hangs over the ways,
 What glory gleams there in the sky,
 What pleasures seem waiting us, high
 On the peak of that beauteous slope,
 What rainbow-hued colours of hope,
 As we gaze!

As we climb up the hill, as we climb,
 Our hearts, our illusions, are rent :
 For Fate, who is spouse of old Time,
 Is jealous of youth and content.
 With brows that are brooding and bent
 She shadows our sunlight of gold,
 And the way grows lonely and cold
 As we climb.

As we toil on, through trouble and pain,
 There are hands that will shelter and feed ;
 But once let us dare to *attain*—
 They will bruise our bare hearts till they bleed.
 'Tis the worst of all crimes to succeed,
 Know this as ye feast on a crust,
 Know this in the darkness and dust,
 Ye who climb.

As we stand on the heights of success,
Lo! success seems as sad as defeat!
Through the lives we may succour and bless
Alone may its bitter turn sweet!
And the world lying there at our feet,
With its cavilling praise and its sneer,
We must pity, condone, but not hear,
Where we stand,

As we live on those heights, we must live
With the courage and pride of a god;
For the world, it has nothing to give
But the scourge of the lash and the rod.
Our thoughts must be noble and broad,
Our purpose must challenge men's gaze,
While we seek not their blame or their praise
As we live.

THE LADY AND THE DAME

SO, thou hast the art, good dame, thou swearest,
To keep Time's perishing touch at bay
From the roseate splendour of the cheek so tender,
And the silver threads from the gold away.
And the tell-tale years that have hurried by us
Shall tip-toe back, and, with kind good-will,
They shall take the traces from off our faces,
If we will trust to thy magic skill.

SWIMMING SONG

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And yet it lingers, suffering and wailing,
As sick hearts will that feed upon despair
And that lone watcher, unrelieved, is paling
With vigils that no pitying soul can share.

Ah, lady! it is hardly what you thought it,
This life of luxury and social power ;
You gave yourself as principal, and bought it,
But God extracts the interest hour by hour.

SWIMMING SONG

I AM coming, coming to thee,
My strong-armed lover, the Sea !
On thy great broad breast I will lie and rest,
And thou shalt talk to me.

I have come to thee, all unsought,
I have stolen an hour from thought,
And peace and power thou must give in that hour,
Which thy rival Earth does not.

Alone here, under the sky,
And the whole world drifting by !
Thy breast of brine thrills close to mine,
While the cloudless sun sails high.

I fly, but thou givest chase—
Thy kisses are on my face !
Be bold and free as thou wilt, O Sea,
There is life in thy close embrace.

When the soft fair arms of the siren Summer
Encircle the earth in their languorous fold,
Will vast, deep oceans of sweet emotions
Surge through my veins as they surged of old?
Canst thou bring back from a day long-vanished
The leaping pulse and the boundless aim?
I will pay thee double, for all thy trouble,
If thou wilt restore all these, good dame.

HEAVEN AND HELL

WHILE forced to dwell apart from thy dear face,
Love, robed like sorrow, led me by the hand
And taught my doubting heart to understand
That which has puzzled all the human race.
Full many a sage has questioned where in space
Those counter worlds were? where the mystic strand
That separates them? I have found each land,
And Hell is vast, and Heaven a narrow space.

In the small compass of thy clasping arms,
In reach and sight of thy dear lips and eyes,
There, there for me the joy of Heaven lies.
Outside, lo! chaos, terrors' wild alarms,
And all the desolation fierce and fell
Of void and aching nothingness, makes Hell.

LOVE'S SUPREMACY

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LOVE'S SUPREMACY

AS yon great Sun in his supreme condition
Absorbs small worlds and makes them all his
own,

So does my love absorb each vain ambition,
Each outside purpose which my life has known.
Stars cannot shine so near that vast orb'd splendour;
They are content to feed his flames of fire:
And so my heart is satisfied to render
Its strength, its all, to meet thy strong desire.

As in a forest when dead leaves are falling
From all save some perennial green tree,
So one by one I find all pleasures palling
That are not linked with or enjoyed by thee.
And all the homage that the world may proffer,
I take as perfumed oils or incense sweet,
And think of it as one thing more to offer,
And sacrifice to Love, at thy dear feet.

I love myself because thou art my lover,
My name seems dear since uttered by thy voice;
Yet, argus-eyed, I watch and would discover
Each blemish in the object of thy choice.
I coldly sit in judgment on each error,
To my soul's gaze I hold each fault of me,
Until my pride is lost in abject terror,
Lest I become inadequate to thee.

THE ETERNAL WILL

Like some swift-rushing and sea-seeking river,
Which gathers force the farther on it goes,
So does the current of my love forever
Find added strength and beauty as it flows.
The more I give, the more remains for giving,
The more receive, the more remains to win.
Ah! only in eternities of living
Will life be long enough to love thee in.

THE ETERNAL WILL

THERE is no thing we cannot overcome.
Say not thy evil instinct is inherited,
Or that some trait inborn makes thy whole life forlorn,
And calls down punishment that is not merited.

Back of thy parents and grandparents lies
The Great Eternal Will. That, too, is thine
Inheritance; strong, beautiful, divine,
Sure lever of success for one who tries.

Pry up thy faults with this great lever, Will.
However deeply bedded in propensity,
However firmly set, I tell thee firmer yet
Is that vast power that comes from Truth's immensity.

Thou art a part of that strange world, I say.
Its forces lie within thee, stronger far
Than all thy mortal sins and frailties are.
Believe thyself divine, and watch, and pray.

There is no noble height thou canst not climb.
All triumphs may be thine in Time's futurity,
If whatso'er thy fault, thou dost not faint or halt,
But lean upon the staff of God's security.

Earth has no claim the soul can not contest.
Know thyself part of that Eternal Source,
And naught can stand before thy spirit's force.
The soul's divine inheritance is best.

INSIGHT

ON the river of life, as I float along,
I see with the spirit's sight
That many a nauseous weed of wrong
Has root in a seed of right.

For evil is good that has gone astray,
And sorrow is only blindness,
And the world is always under the sway
Of a changeless law of kindness.

The commonest error a truth can make
Is shouting its sweet voice hoarse,
And sin is only the soul's mistake
In misdirecting its force.
And love, the fairest of all fair things
That ever to man descended,
Grows rank with nettles and poisonous things
Unless it is watched and tended.

A WOMAN'S LOVE

There could not be anything better than this
 Old world in the way it began ;
 And though some matters have gone amiss
 From the great original plan,
 And however dark the skies may appear,
 And however souls may blunder,
 I tell you it all will work out clear,
 For good lies over and under.

A WOMAN'S LOVE

SO vast the tide of love within me surging,
 It overflows like some stupendous sea,
 The confines of the Present and To-be ;
 And 'gainst the Past's high wall I feel it urging,
 As it would cry, 'Thou, too, shalt yield to me!'

All other love - my supreme love embodies ;
 I would be she on whose soft bosom nursed
 Thy clinging infant lips to quench their thirst ;
 She who trod close to hidden worlds where God is,
 That she might have, and hold, and see thee first.

I would be she who stirred the vague, fond fancies
 Of thy still childish heart ; who through bright days
 Went sporting with thee in the old-time plays,
 And caught the sunlight of thy boyish glances
 In half-forgotten and long-buried Mays.

A WOMAN'S LOVE

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Forth to the end, and back to the beginning,
My love would send its inundating tide,
Where in all landmarks of thy past should hide,
If thy life's lesson *must* be learned through sinning,
My grieving virtue would become thy guide.

For I would share the burden of thy errors,
So when the sun of our brief life had set,
If thou didst walk in darkness and regret,
E'en in that shadowy world of nameless terrors,
My soul and thine should be companions yet.

And I would cross with thee those troubled oceans
Of dark remorse whose waters are despair:
All things my jealous, reckless love would dare,
So that thou mightst not recollect emotions
In which it did not have a part and share.

There is no limit to my love's full measure,
It's spirit-gold is shaped by earth's alloy;
I would be friend and mother, mate and toy,
I'd have thee look to me for every pleasure,
And in me find all memories of joy.

Yet though I love thee in such selfish fashion,
I would wait on thee, sitting at thy feet,
And serving thee, 'f thou didst deem it meet.
And couldst thou give me one fond hour of passion
I'd take that hour and call my life complete.

THE PÆAN OF PEACE

WITH ever some wrong to be righting,
With self ever seeking for place,
The world has been striving and fighting
Since man was evolved out of space.
Bold history into dark regions
His torchlight has fearlessly cast,
He shows us tribes warring in legions,
In jungles of ages long passed.

Religion, forgetting her station,
Forgetting her birthright from God,
Set nation to warring with nation
And scattered dissension abroad.
Dear creeds have made men kill each other,
Fair faith has bred hate and despair,
And brother has battled with brother
Because of a difference in prayer.

But earth has grown wiser and kinder,
For man is evolving a soul:
From wars of an age that was blinder,
We rise to a peace-girdled goal.
Where once men would murder in treason
And slaughter each other in hordes,
They now meet together and reason,
With thoughts for their weapons, not swords.

THE PÆAN OF PEACE

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The brute in humanity dwindles
And lessens as time needs along,
And the spark of Divinity kindles
And blazes up brightly and strong.
The seer can behold in the distance
The race that shall people the world
Strong men of a godlike existence
Unarmed, and with war banners furled.

No longer the bloodthirsty savage
Giant's vast spirit strength shall unfold;
And tales of red warfare and ravage
Shall seem like ghost stories of old.
For the booming of guns and the rattle
Of carnage and conflict shall cease,
And the bugle-call leading to battle,
Shall change to a pæan of peace.

'HAS BEEN'

THAT melancholy phrase 'It might have been,'
However sad, doth in its heart enfold
A hidden germ of promise! for I hold
Whatever might have been shall be.

Though in
Some other realm and life, the soul must win
The goal that erst was possible. But cold
And cruel as the sound of frozen mould
Dropped on a coffin, are the words 'Has been.'

'She has been beautiful'—'he has been great,
'Rome has been powerful,' we sigh and say.
It is the pitying crust we toss decay,
The dirge we breathe o'er some degenerate state,
An epitaph for fame's unburied dead
God pity those who live to hear it said!

DUTY'S PATH

OUT from the harbour of youth's bay
There leads the path of pleasure;
With eager steps we walk that way
To brim joy's largest measure.
But when with morn's departing beam
Goes youth's last precious minute,
We sigh 'Twas but a fevered dream—
There's nothing in it.'

Then on our vision dawns afar
The goal of glory, gleaming
Like some great radiant solar star,
And sets us longing, dreaming.
Forgetting all things left behind,
We strain each nerve to win it,
But when 'tis ours—alas! we find
There's nothing in it.

MARCH

365

We turn our sad, reluctant gaze
Upon the path of duty ;
Its barren, uninviting ways
Are void of bloom and beauty.
Yet in that road, though dark and cold
It seems as we begin it,
As we press on—lo ! we behold
There's Heaven in it.

MARCH

LIKE some reformer, who with mien austere,
Neglected dress, and loud insistent tones,
More rasping than the wrongs which she bemoans,
Walks through the land and wearies all who hear,
While yet we know the need of such reform ;
So comes unlovely March, with wind and storm,
To break the spell of winter, and set free
The poisoned brooks and crocus beds oppressed.
Severe of face, gaunt-armed, and wildly dressed,
She is not fair nor beautiful to see.
But merry April and sweet smiling May
Come not till March has first prepared the way.

THE END OF THE SUMMER

THE birds laugh loud and long together
When Fashion's followers speed away
At the first cool breath of autumn weather.
Why, this is the time, cry the birds, to stay !
When the deep calm sea and the deep sky over
Both look their passion through sun-kissed space,
As a blue-eyed maid and her blue-eyed lover
Might each gaze into the other's face.

Oh ! this is the time when careful spying
Discovers the secrets Nature knows.
You find when the butterflies plan for flying
(Before the thrush or the blackbird goes),
You see some day by the water's edges
A brilliant border of red and black ;
And then off over the hills and hedges
It flutters away on the summer's track.

The shy little sumacs, in lonely places,
Bowed all summer with dust and heat,
Like clean-clad children with rain-washed faces,
Are dressed in scarlet from head to feet.
And never a flower had the boastful summer,
In all the blossoms that decked her sod,
So royal hued as that later comer
The purple chum of the goldenrod.

THE END OF THE SUMMER

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Some chill grey dawn you note with grieving
That the King of Autumn is on his way.
You see, with a sorrowful, slow believing,
How the wanton woods have gone astray.
They wear the stain of bold caresses,
Of riotous revels with old King Frost ;
They dazzle all eyes with their gorgeous dresses,
Nor care that their green young leaves are lost.

A wet wind blows from the East one morning,
The wood's gay garments looked dragged out.
You hear a sound, and your heart takes warning—
The birds are planning their winter route.
They wheel and settle and scold and wrangle,
Their tempers are ruffled, their voices loud ;
Then *whirr*—and away in a feathered tangle,
To fade in the south like a passing cloud.

Envoi

A songless wood stripped bare of glory—
A sodden moor that is black and brown ;
The year has finished its last love-story :
Oh ! let us away to the gay bright town.

SUN SHADOWS

THERE never was success so nobly gained,
Or victory so free from selfish dross,
But in the winning some one had been pained
Or some one suffered loss.

There never was so nobly planned a fête,
Or festal throng with hearts on pleasure bent,
But some neglected one outside the gate
Wept tears of discontent.

There never was a bridal morning fair
With hope's blue skies and love's unclouded sun
For two fond hearts, that did not bring despair
To some sad other one.

'HE THAT LOOKETH'

YEA, she and I have broken God's command,
And in His sight are branded with our shame
And yet I do not even know her name,
Nor ever in my life have touched her hand
Or brushed her garments. But I chanced to stand
Beside her in the throng ! A sweet, swift flame
Shot from her flesh to mine—and hers the blame
Of willing looks that fed it ; aye, that fanned

AN ERRING WOMAN'S LOVE

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The glow within me to a hungry fire.
There was an invitation in her eyes.
Had she met mine with coldness or surprise,
I had not plunged on headlong in the mire
Of amorous thought. The flame leaped high and higher;
Her breath and mine pulsated into sighs,
And soft glance melted into glance kiss-wise,
And in God's sight both yielded to desire.

AN ERRING WOMAN'S LOVE

PART I

SHE was a light and wanton maid :
Not one whom fickle Love betrayed,
For indolence was her undoer.
Fair, frivolous, and very poor,
She scorned the thought of toil, in youth,
And chose the path that leads from truth.

More women fall from want of gold
Than love leads wrong, if truth were told ;
More women sin for gay attire
Than sin through passion's blinding fire.
Her god was gold : and gold she saw
Prove mightier than the sternest law
With judge and jury, priest and king ;
So, made herself an offering
At Mammon's shrine ; and lived for power,
And ease, and pleasures of the hour.

Who looks beneath life's outer crust
Is satisfied that God is just ;
Who looks not under, but about,
Finds much to make him sad with doubt.
For Virtue walks with feet worn bare,
While Sin rides by with coach and pair :
Men praise the modest heart and chaste,
And yet they let it go to waste,
And follow, fierce to have and hold,
Some creature, wanton, selfish, bold.

She saw but this, life's outer side,
No higher faith was hers to guide ;
She worshipped gold, and hated toil,
And hence her youth with all its soil,
With all its sins too dark to name,
Of secret crimes and public shame,
With all its trail of broken lives,
Of ruined homes, neglected wives,
And weeping mothers. Proud and gay
She went her devastating way
With untouched brow and fadeless grace.

Not time, but feeling, marks the face.
Sin on the outer being tells
Not till the startled soul rebels :
And she felt nothing but content.
She was too light and indolent
To worry over days to come.

AN ERRING WOMAN'S LOVE

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This little earth held all life's sum,
She thought, and to be young and fair,
Well clothed, well fed, was all her care.
With pitying eyes and lifted head
She gazed on those who toiled for bread,
And laughed to scorn the talk she heard
Of punishment for those who erred,
And virtue's certain recompense.
She seemed devoid of moral sense,
An ignorant thing whose appetites
Bound her horizon of delights.

Men were her puppets to control;
Unconscious of a heart or soul
She lived, and gloried in the ease
She purchased by her power to please
The eye and senses. Life's one woe
Which caused her pitying tears to flow
Was poverty. Though hearts might break
And homes be ruined for her sake,
She showed no mercy. But when need
Of gold she saw, her heart would bleed.
The lack of clothing, fire, and food
Was earth's one pain, she understood.

The suffering poor oft blest her name,
Nor questioned whence the ducats came,
She gave so freely. Once she found
A fainting woman on the ground,

A wailing child clasped to her breast.
With her own hands she bathed and dressed
The weary waifs! gave food and gold
And clothed them warmly from the cold,
Nor guessed that one she lured from home
Had caused that suffering pair to roam
Unhoused, neglected. Then one day,
Unheralded across her way,
The conqueror came. She knew not why,
But with the first glance of his eye
A feeling, new and unexplained,
Woke in her what she oft had feigned.
And when his arm stole near her waist,
As startled maidens blush with chaste
Sweet fear at love's advances, so
She blushed from brow to breast of snow.
Strange, new emotions, fraught with joy
And pain commingled, made her coy;
But when he would have clasped her neck
With gems that might a queen bedeck
And offered gold, her lips grew white
With sudden anger at the sight
Of what had been her god for years.
She flung them from her. Then such tears
As only spring from love's despair
Welled from her eyes. 'So, lady fair,
My gifts are scorned?' quoth he, and laughed.
'Like Cleopatra, you have quaffed

AN ERRING WOMAN'S LOVE

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Such lordly pearls in draughts of wine,
You spurn poor simple gems like mine.
Well, well, fair queen, I'll bring to you
A richer gift next time. Adieu.'

His light words stung like lash of whips
With gasping breath and ashen lip
She strove to speak, but he was gone.
She kneeled and pressed her mouth upon
The latch his hand had touched, the floor
His foot had trod, and o'er and o'er
She sobbed his name, as children moan
A mother's name when left alone.

Out from the dim and roseate gloom
And subtle odours of her room
Accusing memories rose. She felt
A loneliness that seemed to belt
The universe in its embrace.
It was as if from some high place
A giant hand had reached and hurled
To nothingness her petty world,
And left her staring, awed, alone,
Up into regions vast, unknown.
There is no other loneliness
That can so sadden and oppress
As when beside the burned-out fire
Of sated passion and desire

The wakening spirit, in a glance,
Beholds its lost inheritance.
She rose and turned the dim lights higher,
Brought forth rich gems and grand attire,
And robed herself in feverish haste;
Before the mirror posed and paced,
With jewels on her breast and wrists;
Then sudden clenched her little fists
And beat her face until it bled,
And tore her garments shred from shred,
Gazed in the mirror, spoke her name
And hissed a word that told her shame,
Then on her knees fell sobbing there.

There are sweet messengers of prayer
Who down through space on soft wings steal,
And offer aid to all who kneel.
Her lips, unused to pious phrase,
Recalled some words of bygone days,
And 'Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,'
She whispered timidly, and then,
'Lord, let me be a child again
And grow up good.' The strange prayer said,
Like some o'er-weary child, her head
She pillowed on her arm, and wept
Low, shuddering sobs, until she slept
And dreamed; and in that dream she thought
She sat within a vine-wreathed cot;

AN ERRING WOMAN'S LOVE

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An infant slumbered on her breast,
She crooned a lullaby, and pressed
Its waxen hand against her cheek,
While one, too proud and fond to speak,
The happy father of the child,
Stood near, and gazing on them, smiled.

She woke while still the lullaby
Was on her lips—then such a cry,
As souls in fabled realms below
Might utter, voiced her awful woe.

The mighty moral labour-pain
Of new-born conscience wracked her brain
And tore her soul. She understood
The meaning now of womanhood,
And chastity, and o'er her came
The full, dark sense of all her shame.
As some poor drunken wretch, at night,
Wakes up to know his piteous plight,
And sees, while sinking in the mire,
Afar, his waiting hearth-light's fire ;
So now she saw from depths of sin
The hearth-light of the might-have-been.
How beautiful, how like a star
That lost light shone, but ah, how far !

She reached her longing arms toward space,
And lifted up her tear-wet face.
'O God,' she wailed, 'I have been bad !

I see it all, and I am sad,
And long to be a good girl now.
Lord, Lord, will some one show me how?
Why, men have trod the burning track
Of sin for years, and then gone back!
And cannot I for sin atone,
Or did Christ die for men alone?
I want to lead an honest life,
I want to be his own true wife
And hold upon my breast his child.
Then suddenly her voice grew wild,
'No, no,' she cried, 'it could not be—
Those infant eyes would torture me:
Though God condoned my sinful ways,
I could not meet my child's pure gaze.'

She hid her face upon her knees,
And swayed as reeds sway in a breeze.
'O Christ,' she moaned, 'could I forget,
There might be something for me yet:
But though both God and man forgive,
And I should win the love I crave,
Why, memory would drive me mad.'

When woman drifts from good to bad,
To make her final fall complete,
She puts her soul beneath her feet.
Man's dual selves seem separate;
He leaves his soul outside sin's gate,

And finds it waiting when he tires
Of carnal pleasures and desires,
Depleted, sickened, and depressed,
As souls must be with such a test,
Yet strong enough to help him grope
Back into happiness and hope.
But woman, far more complicate,
Can take no chances with her fate;
A subtle creature, finely spun,
Her body and her soul are one.
And now this erring woman wept
The soul she murdered while it slept.
She felt too stunned with pain to think.
She seemed to stand upon a brink;
Behind her loomed the sinful past,
Below her, rocks, beyond her, vast
And awful darkness. Not one ray
Of sun or star to show the way!
She drew a long and shuddering breath;
'There is no other path but death
For me to tread,' she sighed, 'and so
I will prepare my house and go.'

As housewives move with willing feet
And skilful hands to make things neat
And ready for some welcome one,
She toiled until her tasks were done.
Then, seated at her desk, she wrote,
With painful care, a tear-wet note.

The childish penmanship was rude,
Ill spelled the words, the phrasing crude;
Yet thought and feeling both were there,
And mighty love and great despair.

'Dear heart,' it ran, 'you did not know
How, from the first, I loved you so,
That sin grew hateful in my sight;
And so I leave it all to-night.

The kiss I gave, dear heart, to you
Was love's first kiss, as pure and true
As ever lips of maiden gave.

I think 'twill warm my lonely grave,
And light the pathway I must tread
Among the hapless, homeless dead.

'When God formed worlds, He failed to make
A path for erring feet to take

Back into light and peace again,
Unless they were the feet of men.

When woman errs, and then regrets,
Her sun of hope for ever sets,

And life is hung with deepest gloom.

In all the world there is no room

For such as she; and so I hold

That death itself is not so cold

As life has seemed, since by love's light

I saw there was a wrong and right,

And that my birthright had been sold,

By my own hands, for tarnished gold.

I hated labour, hence I fell;
But now I love you, dear, so well,
No greater boon my soul could crave
Than just to toil, a galley-slave,
Through burdened years and years of life,
If at the last you called me wife
For one supreme and honoured hour.
Alas! too late I learn love's power,
Too late I realise my loss,
And have no strength to bear my cross
Of loneliness and dark disgrace.
There cannot be another place
So desolate, so full of fear,
As earth to me, without you, dear.

* You will not understand, I know,
How one like me can love you so.
It was a strange, strange thing. Love came
So like a swift, devouring flame
And burned my frail, fair-weather boat
And left me on the waves afloat,
With nothing but a broken spar.
The distant shores seem very far;
I cannot reach them, so I sink.
God will forgive my sins, I think,
Because I die for love, like One
The good Book tells about, His Son.

* For erring woman death can bring
No pain so keen as memory's sting.

Good-night, good-bye. God bless you, dear,
And give you love, and joy, and cheer!
But sometimes, in the dark night, say
A prayer for one who went astray,
And found no pathway back, and died
For love of you—a suicide.'

When morn his glorious pinions spread,
They found the erring woman, dead.

PART II

She woke as one wakes from a deep
And dreamless, yet exhausting, sleep.

A strange confusion filled her mind,
And sorrows vague and undefined,

Like half-remembered faces pressed
To memory's window, in her breast,

Gazed at her with reproachful eyes.
She felt a sudden, dazed surprise,

Commingled with a sense of dread,
'I did but sleep—I am not dead,

'The potion and the purpose failed,
And I still live,' she wildly wailed.

'Nay, thou art dead, rash suicide,'
A sad voice spake · and at her side

AN ERRING WOMAN'S LOVE

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She saw a weird and shadowy crowd
With anguished lips, and shoulders bowed,
And orbs that seemed the wells of woe.
She shrieked and veiled her eyes, 'No, no!
'I am not dead! I ache with life.
An earthly passion's hopeless strife
'Still tortures me.' 'Yet thou art dead,'
The voice with sad insistence said.
'But love and sorrow and regret
All die with death. I feel them yet.'
'God bade thee live, and only He
Can say when thou shalt cease to be,'
'But I was sin-sick, sad, alone—
I thought by death I could atone,
'And died that Christ might show me how.'
'Christ bore His burden, why not thou?'
'Oh! lead me to His holy feet
And let my penance be complete.'
'What! thinkest thou to find that path—
Thou who hast tempted Heaven's wrath
'By thy rash deed? Nay, nay, not so,
'Tis but perfected spirits go
'To that supreme and final goal.
A self-sought death delays the soul.

AN ERRING WOMAN'S LOVE

'With yonder shuddering, woeful throng
Of suicides thy ways belong.

'Close to the earth a shadowy band,
Unseen, but seeing all, they stand

'Until their natural time to die,
As God intended, shall draw nigh.

'On earth, repentant, sick of sin,
A ministering angel thou hadst been

'Whose patient toil and deeds divine
Had rescued souls as sad as thine,

'Each deed a firm ascending stair
To lead beyond thy great despair.

'But now it is thy mournful fate
To linger here and meditate

'On thy dark past—to stand so near
The earthly plane that thou canst hear

'Thy lover's voice, while old desire
Shall burn within thee like a fire,

'And grief shall root thee to the spot
To find how soon thou art forgot.

'But since thou hast endured the woes
That only fragile woman knows,

'And loved as only woman can,
Thou shalt not suffer all that man

A SONG OF REPUBLICS

383

'Must suffer when he interferes
With God's great law. In death's dim spheres

'That justice waits, which men refuse.
Thy sex shall in some part excuse

'Thy desperate deed. When God shall send
A second death to be thy friend,

'Thou need'st not fear a darker fate—
Go forth with yonder throng, and wait.'

A SONG OF REPUBLICS

FAIR Freedom's ship, too long adrift—
Of every wind the sport—

Now rigged and manned, her course well planned,
Sails proudly out of port ;

And fluttering gaily from the mast

This motto is unfurled,

Let all men heed its truth who read :

'Republics rule the World !'

The universe is high as God !

Good is the final goal ;

The world revolves and man evolves

A purpose and a soul.

A SONG OF REPUBLICS

No church can bind, no crown forbid
Thought's mighty upward course—
Let kings give way before its sway,
For God inspires its force.

The hero of a vanished age
Was one who bathed in gore ;
Who best could fight was noblest knight
In savage days of yore ;
Now warrior chiefs are out of date,
The times have changed. To-day
We call men great who arbitrate
And keep war's hounds at bay.

The world no longer looks to priest
Or prince to know its needs ;
Earth's human throng has grown too strong
To rule with courts and creeds.
We want no kings but kings of toil—
No crowns but crowns of deeds ;
Not royal birth but sterling worth
Must mark the man who leads.

Proud monarchies are out of step
With modern thought to-day,
For Brotherhood is understood,
And thrones may pass away.

A SONG OF REPUBLICS

385

Men dare to think. Concerted thought
Contains more power than swords:
The force that binds united minds
Defeats mere savage hordes.

Man needs no arbitrary hand
To keep him in control;
He feels the power grow hour by hour
Of his expanding soul:
In God's stupendous scheme of worlds
He knows he has a place;
He is no slave to cringe, and crave
Some worthless monarch's grace.

As ocean billows undermine
The haughty shores each hour,
Time's sea has brought its waves of thought
To crumble thrones of power;
And one by one shall kingdoms fall
Like leaves before the blast,
As man with man combines to plan
Republics formed to last.

Columbia baulked a tyrant king,
And built upon a rock,
In Freedom's name, a shrine whose fame
Outlived the century's shock.

Now France within our port has set
Her symbol of re-birth ;
Her lifted hand tells sea and land
Republics light the earth.

One mighty church for all the world
Would make men far more kind ;
One government would bring content
To many a restless mind.
Sail on, fair ship of Freedom, sail
The wide sea's breadth and length
'Till worlds unite to make the might
Of 'One Republic's' strength.

MEMORIAL DAY—1892

THE quiet graves of our country's braves
Through thirty Junes and Decembers
Have solemnly lain under sun and rain,
And yet the Nation remembers.

The marching of feet and the flags on the street
Told once again this morning,
In the voice of the drum how the day had come
For those lowly beds' adorning.

Then swiftly back on Time's worn track
His three decades seemed driven,
And with startled eyes I saw arise,
From graves by fancy riven,

MEMORIAL DAY—1892

387

The Gray and Blue in a grand review.
Oh ! vast were the hosts they numbered,
As they wheeled and swayed in a dress parade
O'er the graves where they long had slumbered.

The colours were not, as when they fought,
Ranked one against the other,
But a mingled hue of gray and blue,
As brother marching with brother.

And a blue flower lay on each coat of gray,
Like forget-me-nots on a boulder ;
And the gray moss lace in its Southern grace
Was knotted on each blue shoulder.

The vision fled ; but I think our dead,
If they could come back with the living,
Would clasp warm hands o'er hostile lands,
Forgetting old wrongs and forgiving.

'Mong the blossoms of Spring that you gather and bring
To graves that though lowly are royal,
Let the blue flower prevail, though modest and pale,
Since it speaks of the hue that was loyal.

But tie each bouquet with a ribbon of gray
And lay it on memory's altar,
For the dead who fought for the cause they thought
Was right, and who did not falter.

WHEN BABY SOULS SAIL OUT

WHEN from our mortal vision
 Grown men and women go
 To sail strange fields Elysian
 And know what spirits know,
 I think of them as tourists,
 In some sun-gilded clime,
 'Mong happy sights and dear delights
 We all shall find, in time.

But when a child goes yonder
 And leaves its mother here,
 Its little feet must wander,
 It seems to me, in fear.
 What paths of Eden beauty,
 What scenes of peace and rest,
 Can bring content to one who weets
 Forth from a mother's breast?

In palace gardens, lonely,
 A little child will roam
 And weep for pleasures only
 Found in its humble home.
 It is not won by splendour,
 Nor bought by costly toys;
 To hide from harm on mother's arm
 Makes all its sum of joys.

WHEN BABY SOULS SAIL OUT

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It must be when the baby
Goes journeying off alone,
Some angel (Mary, may be)
Adopts it for her own.
Yet when a child is taken
Whose mother stays below,
With weeping eyes, through Paradise,
I seem to see it go.

With troops of angels trying
To drive away its fear,
I seem to hear it crying,
'I want my mamma here.'
I do not court the fancy,
It is not based on doubt,
It is a thought that comes unsought
When baby souls sail out.

TO ANOTHER WOMAN'S BABY

I LIST your prattle, baby boy,
And hear your pattering feet
With feelings more of pain than joy
And thoughts of bitter-sweet.

While touching your soft hands in play
Such passionate longings rise
For my wee boy who strayed away
So soon to Paradise.

390 DIAMONDS—RUBIES—SAPPHIRES

You win me with your infant art ;
But when our play is o'er,
The empty cradle in my heart
Seems lonelier than before.

Sweet baby boy, you do not guess
How oft mine eyes are dim,
Or that my lingering caress
Is sometimes meant for *him*.

DIAMONDS

THE tears of fallen women turned to ice
By man's cold pity for repentant vice.

RUBIES

THE crimson life-drops from a virgin heart
Pierced to the core by Cupid's fatal dart.

SAPPHIRES

LOST rays of light that wandered off alone
And down through space were hurled
From that great sapphire sun beyond our own
Pale, puny little world.

TURQUOISE

A BABY went to heaven while it slept,
 And, waking, missed its mother's arms, and
 wept.
 Those angel tear-drops, falling earthward through
 God's azure skies, into the turquoise grew.

REFORM

THE time has come when men with hearts
 and brains
 Must rise and take the misdirected reins
 Of government; too long left in the hands
 Of aliens and of lackeys. He who stands
 And sees the mighty vehicle of State
 Hauled through the mire to some ignoble fate
 And makes not such bold protest as he can,
 Is no American.

A MINOR CHORD

I HEARD a strain of music in the street—
 A wandering waif of sound. And then straight-
 way
 A nameless desolation filled the day.
 The great green earth that had been fair and sweet

Seemed but a tomb; the life I thought replete
 With joy, grew lonely for a vanished May.
 Forgotten sorrows resurrected lay
 Like bleaching skeletons about my feet.

Above me stretched the silent, suffering sky,
 Dumb with vast anguish for departed suns
 That brutal Time to nothingness has hurled.
 The daylight was as sad as smiles that lie
 Upon the wistful, unkissed mouths of nuns,
 And I stood prisoned in an awful world.

DEATH'S PROTEST

WHY dost thou shrink from my approach, O Man?
 Why dost thou ever flee in fear, and cling
 To my false rival, Life? I do but bring
 Thee rest and calm. Then wherefore dost thou bar
 And curse me? Since the forming of God's plan
 I have not hurt or harmed a mortal thing,
 I have bestowed sweet balm for every sting,
 And peace eternal for earth's stormy span.

The wild mad prayers for comfort sent in vain
 To knock at the indifferent heart of Life,
 I, Death, have answered. Knowest thou not 'tis he,
 My cruel rival, who sends all thy pain
 And wears the soul out in unending strife?
 Why dost thou hold to him, then, spurning me?

SEPTEMBER

MY life's long radiant Summer halts at last,
 And lo! beside my path way I behold
 Pursuing Autumn glide: nor frost nor cold
 Has heralded her presence; but a vast
 Sweet calm that comes not till the year has passed
 Its fevered solstice, and a tinge of gold
 Subdues the vivid colouring of bold
 And passion-hued emotions. I will cast

My August days behind me with my May,
 Nor strive to drag them into Autumn's place,
 Nor swear I hope when I do but remember.
 Now violet and rose have had their day,
 I'll pluck the soberer asters with good grace
 And call September nothing but September.

WAIL OF AN OLD-TIMER

EACH new invention doubles our worries an' our
 troubles,
 These scientific fellows are spoilin' of our land;
 With motor, wire, an' cable, now'days we're scarcely
 able
 To walk or ride in peace o' mind, an' 'tisn't safe to
 stand.

It fairly makes me crazy to see how tarnal lazy

The risin' generation grows—an' science is to blame.
With telephones for talkin', an' messengers for walkin',
Our young men sit an' loaf an' smoke, without a
blush o' shame.

An' then they wer'n't contented until some one invented
A sort o' jerky tape-line clock, to help on wasteful
ways.

An' that infernal ticker spends money fur 'em quicker
Than any neighbourhood o' men in good old bygone
days.

The risin' generation is bent so on creation,
Folks haven't time to talk or sing or cry or even laugh.
But if you take the notion to want some such emotion,
They've got it all on tap fur you, right in the phono-
graph.

But now a crazy creature has introduced the feature
Of artificial weather, I think we're nearly through.
For when we once go strainin' to keep it dry or rainin'
To suit the general public, 'twill bust the world in
two.

WAS, IS, AND YET-TO-BE

WAS, Is, and Yet-to-Be
Were chatting over a cup of tea.

In tarnished finery smelling of must,
Was talked of people long turned to dust;

Of titles and honours and high estate,
All forgotten or out of date;

Of wonderful feasts in the long ago,
Of pride that perished with nothing to show.

'I loathe the present,' said Was, with a groan;
'I live in pleasures that I *have* known.'

The Yet-to-be, in a gown of gauze,
Looked over the head of musty Was,

And gazed far off into misty space
With a wrapt expression upon her face.

'Such wonderful pleasures are coming to me,
Such glory, such honour,' said Yet-to-be.

'No one dreamed, in the vast Has-Been,
Of such successes as I shall win.

'The past, the present—why, what are they?
I live for the joy of a future day.'

Then practical Is, in a fresh print dress,
Spoke up with a laugh, 'I must confess

'I find to-day so pleasant,' she said,
'I never look back, and seldom ahead.

'Whatever has been, is a finished sum;
Whatever will be—why, let it come.

'To-day is mine. And so, you see,
I have the past and the yet-to-be;

'For to-day is the future of yesterday,
And the past of to-morrow. I live while I may,

'And I think the secret of pleasure is this,
And this alone,' said practical Is.

MISTAKES

GOD sent us here to make mistakes,
To strive, to fail, to re-begin,
To taste the tempting fruit of sin,
And find what bitter food it makes.

To miss the path, to go astray,
To wander blindly in the night;
But, searching, praying for the light,
Until at last we find the way.

MISTAKES

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And looking back along the past,
We know we needed all the strain
Of fear and doubt and strife and pain
To make us value peace, at last.

Who fails, finds later triumph sweet ;
Who stumbles once, walks then with ease,
And knows the place to cry ' Beware '
To other unaccustomed feet.

Through strife the slumbering soul awakes,
We learn on error's troubled route
The truths we could not prize without
The sorrow of our sad mistakes.

DUAL

YOU say that your nature is double ; that life
Seems more and more intricate, complex, and dual,
Because in your bosom there wages the strife
"Twixt an angel of light and a beast that is cruel—
An angel who whispers your spirit has wings,
And a beast who would chain you to temporal things.

I listen with interest to all you have told,
And now let me give you my view of your trouble :
You are to be envied, not pitied ; I hold
That every strong nature is always made double.
The beast has his purpose ; he need not be slain :
He should serve the good angel in harness and chain.

The body that never knows carnal desires,
 The heart that to passion is always a stranger,
 Is merely a furnace with unlighted fires;
 It sends forth no warmth while it threatens no danger.
 But who wants to shiver in cold safety there?
Touch flame to the fuel! then watch it with care.

Those wild, fierce emotions that trouble your soul
 Are sparks from the great source of passion and power;
 Throne reason above them, and give it control,
 And turn into blessing this dangerous dower.
 By lightnings unguided destruction is hurled,
 But chained and directed they gladden the world.

THE ALL-CREATIVE SPARK

PAIN can go guised as joy, dross pass for gold,
 Vulgarity can masquerade as wit,
 Or spite wear friendship's garments; but I hold
 That passionate feeling has no counterfeit.
 Chief jewel from Jove's crown 'twas sent men, lent
 For inspiration and for sacrament.

Jove never could have made the Universe
 Had he not glowed with passion's sacred fire;
 Though man oft turns the blessing to a curse,
 And burns himself on his own funeral pyre,
 Though scarred the soul be where its light burns bright,
 Yet where it is not, neither is there might.

THE ALL-CREATIVE SPARK

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Yea, it was set in Jove's resplendent crown
When he created worlds; that done, why, hence,
He cast the priceless, awful jewel down
To be man's punishment and recompense.
And that is how he sees and hears our tears
Unmoved and calm from the eternal spheres.

But sometimes, since he parted with all passion,
In trifling mood, to pass the time away,
He has created men in that same fashion,
And many women (jesting as gods may),
Who have no souls to be inspired or fired,
Mere sport of idle gods who have grown tired.

And these poor puppets, gazing in the dark
At their own shadows, think the world no higher;
And when they see the all-creative spark
In other souls, they straightway cry out, 'Fire!'
And shriek, and rave, till their dissent is spent,
While listening gods laugh loud in merriment.

BE NOT CONTENT

BE not content—contentment means inaction;
The growing soul aches on its upward quest;
Satiety is twin to satisfaction;
All great achievements spring from life's unrest.

The tiny roots, deep in the dark mould hiding,
Would never bless the earth with leaf and flower
Were not an inborn restlessness abiding
In seed and germ, to stir them with its power.

Were man contented with his lot forever,
He had not sought strange seas with sails unfurled,
And the vast wonder of our shores had never
Dawned on the gaze of an admiring world.

Prize what is yours, but be not quite contented.
There is a healthful restlessness of soul
By which a mighty purpose is augmented
In urging men to reach a higher goal.

So when the restless impulse rises, driving
Your calm content before it, do not grieve;
It is the upward reaching of the spirit
Of the God in you to achieve—achieve.

ACTION

FOR ever stars are winging
Their swift and endless race;
For ever suns are swinging
Their mighty globes through space,
Since by his law required
To join God's spheres inspired,
The earth has never tired,
But whirled and whirled and whirled.

ACTION

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For ever streams are flowing,
For ever seeds are growing,
Alway is Nature showing
That Action rules the world.

And since by God requested
To *be*, the glorious light
Has never paused or rested,
But travelled day and night.
Yet pigmy man, unseeing
The purpose of his being,
Demands escape and freeing
From universal force.
But law is law for ever,
And like a mighty lever
It thrusts him tow'rd endeavour,
And speeds him on his course.

TWO ROSES

A HUMBLE wild-rose, pink and slender,
Was plucked and placed in a bright bouquet,
Beside a Jacqueminot's royal splendour,
And both in my lady's boudoir lay.

Said the haughty bud, in a tone of scorning,
'I wonder why you are called a rose ?
Your leaves will fade in a single morning ;
No blood of mine in your pale cheek glows.

' Your coarse green stalk shows dust of the highway,
 You have no depths of fragrant bloom ;
 And what could you learn in a rustic byway
 To fit you to lie in my lady's room ?

' If called to adorn her warm, white bosom,
 What have you to offer for such a place,
 Beside my fragrant and splendid blossom,
 Ripe with colour and rich with grace ?

Said the sweet wild-rose, ' Despite your dower
 Of finer breeding and deeper hue,
 Despite your beauty, fair, high-bred flower,
 It is I who should lie on her breast, not you.

' For small account is your hot-house glory
 Beside the knowledge that came to me
 When I heard by the wayside love's old story,
 And felt the kiss of the amorous bee.'

SATIETY

TO yearn for what we have not had, to sit
 With hungry eyes glued on the Future's gate,
 Why, that is heaven compared to having it
 With all the power gone to appreciate.

Better to wait and yearn, and still to wait,
 And die at last with unappeased desire,
 Than live to be the jest of such a fate,
 For that is my conception of hell-fire.

A SOLAR ECLIPSE

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A SOLAR ECLIPSE

IN that great journey of the stars through space
About the mighty, all-directing Sun,
The pallid, faithful Moon has been the one
Companion of the Earth. Her tender face,
Pale with the swift, keen purpose of that race
Which at Time's natal hour was first begun.
Shines ever on her lover as they run
And lights his orbit with her silvery smile.
Sometimes such passionate love doth in her rise,
Down from her beaten path she softly slips,
And with her mantle veils the Sun's bold eyes,
Then in the gloaming finds her lover's lips.
While far and near the men our world call wise
See only that the Sun is in eclipse.

A SUGGESTION

TO C. A. D.

LET the wild red-rose bloom. Though not to thee
So delicately perfect as the white
And unwed lily drooping in the light,
Though she has known the kisses of the bee
And tells her amorous tale to passers-by
In perfumed whispers and with untaught grace
Still let the red-rose bloom in her own place ;
She could not be the lily should she try.

THE DEPTHS

Why to the wondrous nightingale cry hush
 Or bid her cease her wild heart-breaking lay,
 And tune her voice to imitate the way
 The whip-poor-will makes music, or the thrush ?
 All airs of sorrow to one theme belong,
 And passion is not copyrighted yet.
 Each heart writes its own music. Why not let
 The nightingale unchided sing her song ?

THE DEPTHS

NOT only sun-kissed heights are fair. Below
 The cold, dark billows of the frowning deep
 Do lovely blossoms of the ocean sleep,
 Rocked gently by the waters to and fro.
 The coral beds with magic colours glow,
 And priceless pearl-encrusted molluscs heap
 The glittering rocks where shining atoms leap
 Like living broken rainbows.

Even so
 We find the sea of sorrow. Black as night
 The sullen surface meets our frightened gaze,
 As down we sink to darkness and despair.
 But at the depths—such beauty ! such delight !
 Such flowers as never grew in pleasure's ways !
 Ah ! not alone are sun-kissed summits fair.

LIFE'S OPERA

LIKE an opera-house is the world, I ween,
Where the passionate lover of music is seen
In the balcony near the roof:
While the very best seat in the first stage-box
Is filled by the person who laughs and talks
Through the harmony's warp and woof.

THE SALT SEA-WIND

WHEN Venus, mother and maker of blisses,
Rose out of the billows, large-limbed, and fair,
She stood on the sands and blew sweet kisses
To the salt sea-wind as she dried her hair.
And the salt sea-wind was the first to carew her,
To praise her beauty and call her sweet,
The first of the whole wide world to possess her,
She, that creature of light and heat.
Though the sea is old with its sorrows and angers,
And the world has forgotten why love was born,
Yet the salt sea-wind is full of the languors
That Venus taught on her natal morn.
And now whoever dwells there by the ocean,
And feels the wind on his hair and face,
Is stirred by a subtle and keen emotion,
The lingering spell of that first embrace.

NEW YEAR

NEW YEAR, I look straight in your eyes—
Our ways and our interests blend ;
You may be a foe in disguise,
But I shall believe you a friend.
We get what we give in our measure,
We cannot give pain and get pleasure ;
I give you good will and good cheer,
And you must return it, New Year.

We get what we give in this life,
Though often the giver indeed
Waits long upon doubting and strife
Ere proving the truth of my creed.
But somewhere, some way, and for ever
Reward is the meed of endeavour ;
And if I am really worth while,
New Year, you will give me your smile.

You hide in your mystical hand
No 'luck' that I cannot control,
If I trust my own courage and stand
On the Infinite strength of my soul.
Man holds in his brain and his spirit
A power that is God-like, or near it,
And he who has measured his force
Can govern events and their course.

CONCENTRATION

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You come with a crown on your brow,
New Year, without blemish or spot;
Yet you, and not I, sir, must bow,
For time is the servant of thought.
Whatever you bring me of trouble
Shall turn into good, and then double,
If my spirit looks up without fear
To the Source that you came from, New Year.

CONCENTRATION

THE age is too diffusive. Time and Force
Are frittered out and bring no satisfaction.
The way seems lost to straight determined action.
Like shooting stars that zig-zag from their course
We wander from our orbit's pathway; spoil
The rôle we're fitted for, to fail in twenty.
Bring empty measures, that were shaped for plenty,
At last as guerdon for a life of toil.
There's lack of greatness in this generation
Because no more man centres on one thought.
We know this truth, and yet we heed it not:
The secret of success is Concentration.

THOUGHTS

THOUGHTS do not need the wings of words
To fly to any goal.
Like subtle lightnings, not like birds,
They speed from soul to soul.

Hide in your heart a bitter thought—
 Still it has power to blight;
 Think Love—although you speak it not,
 It gives the world more light.

LUCK

LUCK is the tuning of our inmost thought
 To chord with God's great plan.

That done, ah ! know,
 Thy silent wishes to results shall grow,
 And day by day shall miracles be wrought.
 Once let thy being selflessly be brought
 To chime with universal good, and lo !
 What music from the spheres shall through
 thee flow !

What benefits shall come to thee unsought !

Shut out the noise of traffic ! Rise above
 The body's clamour ! With the soul's fine ear
 Attune thyself to harmonies divine—

All, all are written in the key of Love.

Keep to the score, and thou hast naught to fear ;
 Achievements yet undreamed of shall be thine.

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